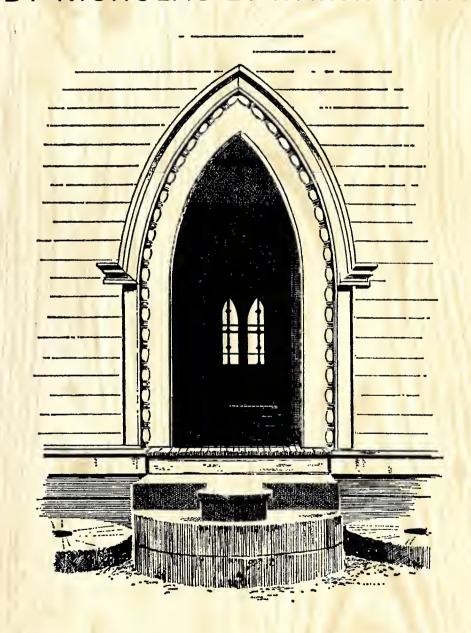
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THE IRVINE STORY

BY NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA, 1964

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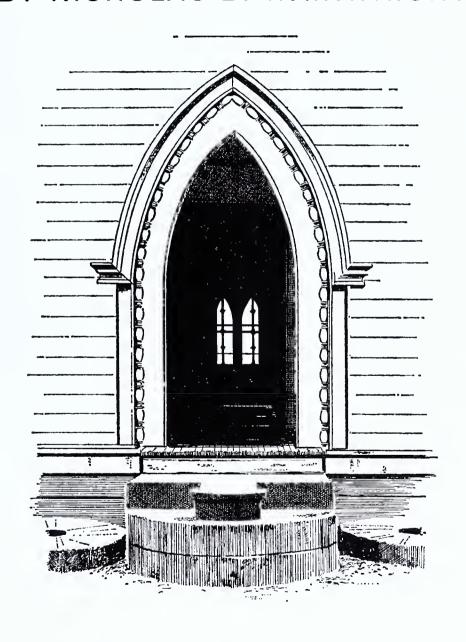




GENERAL WILLIAM IRVINE

THE IRVINE STORY

BY NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA, 1964

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Author's Preface

This narrative owes its existence to Mrs. Caryl Roberts of Wakefield, Rhode Island, a descendant of General William Irvine. It was her desire that some account be recorded of the lives of the five generations of her forebears who owned land along the Brokenstraw Creek and the Allegheny River in Warren County, Pennsylvania, land that has now, at long last, passed out of the family's hands. It is through her generosity that this publication has been made possible.

The account which follows is based on the surviving Irvine Papers. Thousands of manuscripts have been examined in an effort to distill from them a relatively undetailed but comprehensive picture of the changing times and people at Irvine. Imperfect as this picture is in so many ways, the author hopes that the setting forth of many of the salient facts will preserve an idea of the place and those who lived there.

In several matters, but particularly on the history of Irvine before 1785, the author is much indebted to M. H. Deardorff of Warren, Pennsylvania, and to Donald H. Kent of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. It is a pleasure to express thanks for expert assistance so freely bestowed.

N. B. W.



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With the exception of the photographs of portraits, which were furnished by Mrs. Caryl Roberts, and the Indian burial mound scene, which was provided by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, all the illustrations have been taken from manuscripts, maps, and photographs at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

THE IRVINE STORY

The Road to Irvine

One morning in the early spring of 1850, a traveler emerged from the Cornplanter Hotel, where he had spent the night. He had a little time on his hands as the stage for Warren had not yet arrived, and so he wandered out on the covered bridge which spanned a nearby creek bearing the curious name of Brokenstraw. What impressed the stranger was the large number of business enterprises he saw grouped together. Strangely enough, they were all deserted.

No one followed the plow across the broad alluvial flats which stretched impressively along the Brokenstraw at its mouth and thence down the Allegheny River. This farm, he had learned, was the property of a Dr. William A. Irvine. Indeed, the vicinity was named Irvine. Here was a large general store, but no farmers came today to barter produce for dry goods. The store was closed. Here, also, was the Irvine post office and it, too, was shut. Signs disclosed that Dr. Irvine not only owned the store but held the office of postmaster.

Not far from the bridge was a woolen factory with barrels of cloth ready for loading on a keelboat moored at the landing. The stranger sauntered over to the loading platform and saw that the shipment was consigned to "Dr. Stephen Duncan—Natchez." He had heard that Dr. Irvine owned this factory as well as all the other businesses which lay in view—the foundry and machine shop, the blacksmith shop, the gristmill, and the sawmill.

Upwards of fifty men and women were needed to keep the wheels of all these operations turning, but none were at work today. The landing places along the creek, where the Doctor's purchases of pine boards were stacked high, were devoid of activity. No one was at hand to transfer the boards to the awaiting rafts which were destined to take the lumber to market, once the spring freshets flooded the Brokenstraw.

All labor was stilled because a dreadful tragedy had prostrated the house of Irvine. From the Doctor's mansion, situated out of sight

beyond the flats, a funeral procession had set forth on its sad journey. The stranger saw it come out of the woods from a road above the farm fields, and he watched it turn slowly up the distant hill toward the church which Dr. Irvine had built.

Later, when his stage went jolting and swaying along toward Warren, the thoughts of the man from the Cornplanter Hotel revolved about that scene at the crossing of the Brokenstraw. How was it that such a place as Irvine had come into existence? What was its future to be? What kind of a man was Dr. William A. Irvine?

In part, the answers to these questions may be found in the Irvine family papers, a voluminous accumulation despite the wholesale disappearance of large segments of it. Fortunately, enough remains to set the modern traveler on the road to Irvine, a road which had its beginnings in the career of Brigadier General William Irvine of Revolutionary War fame.

General William Irvine

The founder of the family was born on November 3, 1741, in Ulster, Ireland. Of sturdy Scotch Presbyterian stock, he attended Trinity College, Dublin, and then entered the army as a cornet. This first of his military ventures was short-lived, for he quarreled with his colonel and quit the service to study medicine. On completing his course, he returned to military duty as surgeon on a British warship during the war with France. Peace being re-established in 1763, Irvine came to Pennsylvania and settled in Carlisle, where he practiced medicine.¹

From 1774, when he represented Cumberland County at a convention held in Philadelphia to denounce British tyranny, until his

¹ A brief account of Gen. Irvine's Revolutionary services is to be found in Thomas J. Rogers, A New American Biographical Dictionary (Easton, 1813). In the second edition of this work in 1823, Rogers omits Irvine, but in the third edition of 1824 he includes an entirely new biography of him at considerable length. This biography is based on material furnished by the Irvine family as Dr. W. A. Irvine's annotated copy suggests. Later sketches by Consul W. Butterfield in his An Historical Account of the Expedition against Sandusky (Cincinnati, 1873) and his Washington-Irvine Correspondence (Madison, 1882) follow Rogers' 1824 version. Irvine is included in the Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1932), IX, 500.

death thirty years later, he was almost constantly engaged in public duties. At the outset of the Revolution, he raised and commanded the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment, and on May 12, 1779, was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the Continental Army. Two years later, he was given the command of the dangerous northwestern frontier with headquarters at Fort Pitt, and there he remained until after the end of the war. At this post, he received valuable assistance from his aide-de-camp "John Rose," a Russian nobleman, the Baron de Rosenthal, who had fled his homeland after killing a man in a duel. Following the Revolution, Rose was permitted to return to Russia, where he ended his days as grand marshal of Estonia.²

Inductories

Brygger General Swine

Sort For

General and aide thus went their separate ways, Irvine being sent west in 1785 to locate land, Donation Land, which was to be given by the state to its Revolutionary soldiers. On this mission, General Irvine headed north from Fort Pitt to Venango (present-day Franklin), where years before the French and their British successors had had a fort, and where peace was again bringing traders to deal with the Indians. There, to his annoyance, he was delayed for several days by a council with the natives. They were reluctant to allow him

² On the reverse of a photograph of a portrait of Rose in the Newbold-Irvine Papers is the following notation: "Gustavus Henry Johann, Baron de Rosenthal. Born in the estate Jeddefer (Estonia, Russia) on 10/22 January 1753. Died in the estate Felcks (Estonia) on 26 June/8 July, 1829. Aid-de-camp to Brigadier General William Irvine." For a brief biography of Rose, see *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (hereinafter *PMHB*), XVIII (1894), 129–137.

to explore the country, but finally let him proceed under the escort of the local Seneca chief, All Face.³

Eight miles farther up the Allegheny, Irvine came to the mouth of Oil Creek. There, he studied the phenomena from which it took its name—the mysterious globules that bubbled up from the stream and which the natives esteemed so highly for their medicinal qualities. Leaving Oil Creek behind him, Irvine and his party went on another nineteen miles "to a place named by the natives the Burying Ground," today the site of Tidioute in Warren County. Tradition had it that an extraordinary Indian had been buried there centuries ago.

Hemmed in by the mountains, which descended so precipitously to the Allegheny that Irvine's expedition was at times forced to travel in the river bed, the explorers pressed on from the Burying Ground. "To Brokenstraw Creek, or Bockaloons, from the last named place is about fourteen miles," noted Irvine. "Here the hills are not so high or barren, and there are sundry good bottoms along the River. About half way there is a hill called by the Indians Paint Hill, where they find very good oker. Brokenstraw is thirty yards wide, there is a fine situation and good bottom near the mouth on both sides, but a little way up the creek large hills covered with pine make their appearance." The General proceeded only seven or eight miles farther to the mouth of the Conewango, where Warren now is, and then doubled back to continue his explorations in greater depth.⁴

Had there been an Indian settlement of any note at Buckaloons, as the name is generally spelled, it is probable that Irvine would have mentioned it. Whether or not Indians happened to be in the vicinity at the time of his arrival, prehistoric burial mounds in its broad meadows told of ancient Indian habitation. When it was that the mound-builders first came there is a question for the archaeologist to solve. It has been surmised, however, that their campfires gleamed along the waters of the Brokenstraw and the Allegheny as far back as 400 or 500 B.C. The prehistoric era of human life at Buckaloons extended over many centuries before the white man recorded its name.

³ Irvine to John Dickinson, Venango, June 9, 1785, Draper Collection, 1AA, 415–417; Richard Butler to Irvine, Sept. 25, 1785, Gen. Irvine Papers, IX, 17. Citations courtesy of Donald H. Kent.

⁴ Pennsylvania Archives, XI, 514-517.

My Deanot love

Zat Bitt. June 15 1702

It is long indust vine Theard from you, Thave expected on Dunian a fortnight; M. Rose Tetwined last night from the Expedition with The Melitia against the Judian Town Sandustry but was unsumpofull, they faught hart of two days, but war oblight to netrat without distraying the Town, but last only about fauty - min billed, Wounded and Infoing - ch! Roses Horfe was wounded his fam not centain of a sour conveyance for this will not addi . Jam my lovie

LETTER OF GENERAL IRVINE TO HIS WIFE

The white man had curious customs which the Indians found difficult to understand. These intruders sent small parties of explorers through the vast hunting grounds where the natives lived, and then laid claim to the land, if not as their own at least as being under their protection. There were two breeds of whites, one in Canada that spoke French and one on the eastern seaboard that spoke English. It was, of course, but a matter of time before these aliens would be at each other's throats. Their conflicting views over the ownership of what the Indian had considered his own land could be settled only by the sword.

The Seneca Indians at Buckaloons saw some of the steps in this process, and they and the Delawares, who also lived there, were ultimately the victims of it. Their first contact was with the French. The record is not clear, but it appears that the French had traders in that area and perhaps a fort in 1731. Life took on something of a new complexion for the redmen as they acquired European merchandise in exchange for their beaver skins and deer hides. In 1739, the French recorded the name of the place as La Paille Coupée. The English preferred Buckaloons, a corruption of an Algonquian designation, and, ultimately, the name became Brokenstraw. All meant the same thing. It seems that along the creek and over the flats grew a grass which attained a respectable height before it withered and cracked, giving the ground the appearance of being covered with broken straw.

During the 1740's, the operations of Pennsylvania traders along the upper Allegheny assumed large-scale proportions, quite eclipsing French activity. At the end of the decade, it was officially reported that "Croghan and others had stores on ye Lake Erie . . . and upon the Ohio from Bockaloons, an Indian town near its head, to below ye mouth of the Miami River, an extent of 500 miles, on one of the most

⁵ William A. Hunter, Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1753–1758 (Harrisburg, 1960), 7. Citation courtesy of Donald H. Kent.

⁶ M. H. Deardorff of Warren has made an extensive study of the Indian names for Brokenstraw, and kindly lent the author his notes on the matter. Additional light on this subject is found in the following statement: "I learn that the earliest settlers of the region found, at the date of their coming into the country, on the *Irvine Flats* at the mouth of the Brokenstraw (where traces of previous cultivation by the Indians appeared in numerous corn hills) an abundant growth of a sort of wild grass, which, after the first frosts in the fall, bent and broke down together in such a manner as to form a tangled mat, rendering it difficult to walk there, and that, from this circumstance the Brokenstraw Creek derived its name," John C. Perkins, Resources of the Philadelphia and Eric Railroad Region (Eric, 1868), 23-24.

beautiful rivers in ye world, yn they traded all along the river." George Croghan, the most important of the traders, was in partnership with a number of the principal operators, men like Robert Callender and William Trent who lived in or about Carlisle. It is not known whether Croghan had his own men at Buckaloons in the 1740's, but English traders were certainly there.

It was the incursions of these men that forced the French to take action lest they lose all control over the natives and the power to hold lands they deemed theirs by right of discovery. Their first approach to the problem was a peaceable one. In 1749, a large expedition under Céloron de Blainville sallied forth to demonstrate French ownership of the Allegheny and Ohio by burying lead plates stating their claim. Céloron came into the disputed area by way of the Chautauqua Creek, which empties into Lake Erie. Ascending the creek, he crossed Lake Chautauqua, entered the Conewango Creek and arrived at its outlet into the Allegheny on July 29.

The next day he held a conference with the Indians at Buckaloons, warning them against dealing with the English, and reproaching them for the cabin he found prepared for the use of Pennsylvania traders. The natives chose to be diplomatic. They assured Céloron that they would follow his advice, and, as for the cabin, it would be turned over to their young people as a recreation hall. Father Bonnecamps, who accompanied Céloron, was unimpressed with the place: "La paillee coupee is a very insignificant village, composed of Iroquois and some Loups. It is situated on the northern bank of the Ohio, and is bounded by a group of mountains which form a very narrow half-basin, at the bottom of which is the village." Céloron and his followers disappeared down the river, unable to accomplish anything of consequence.⁸

Perceiving that something more than words were necessary, the French resorted to force in 1753. The year before, they had established a bridgehead on the Allegheny by sending one of their most capable men, one of the brothers Joncaire, to Buckaloons. There he set up a trading post and turned the natives against the English. The French considered the settlement on Brokenstraw Creek most strategic. Among the forts they projected for construction in their

⁷ Pennsylvania Archives, II, 238.

⁸ Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, XXIX (1920), 343-346, 402.

invasion plans was one at La Paille Coupée. In 1753, they perfected their military lines of communication into the Ohio country, and word that they had fortified Buckaloons was reported in Philadelphia. The next year, they swept the English off the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers and held that region until late in 1758, when their enemy returned in force to capture Fort Duquesne. In 1759, the English completed their conquest, and the might of France was seen no more along the rivers.

No historical data of consequence is recorded about Buckaloons for the years that followed. When the Revolution came on, its inhabitants remained true to the British. War parties from its vicinity harassed the American troops at Fort Pitt. To suppress this dangerous nuisance, a punitive expedition under Colonel Daniel Brodhead was organized. Brodhead left Fort Pitt on August 11, 1779, with six hundred men. He encountered no resistance on his way up the Allegheny until, within a few miles of Buckaloons, his advance guard fell on a band of Indian warriors and drove them off in a bloody engagement. "The next morning," wrote Brodhead, "the Troops proceeded to Buchloons, where I ordered a small Breastwork to be thrown up of felled Timber & fascines, a Capt. & forty men were left to secure our Baggage & Stores, & the Troops immediately proceeded to Conawago, which I found had been deserted about eighteen months past." "I

Intent on driving the Indians away, Brodhead journeyed on, discovering several towns which he destroyed, together with their fields of corn and other crops. On their way home, Brodhead's men also demolished all the houses at Conewango and Buckaloons. It may well be that the Indian village on the Brokenstraw never recovered from this raid, although doubtless some Indians continued

⁹ Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, Wilderness Chronicles of Northwestern Pennsylvania (Harrisburg, 1941), 41.

¹⁰ Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, July 5, 1753, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, VI, 37, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). Citation courtesy of M. H. Deardorff.

¹¹ Pennsylvania Archives, XII, 155-157. There has been some question as to the location of Brodhead's breastworks. On Apr. 25, 1792, William Irvine applied for a warrant for two hundred acres, in the name of his friend Thomas Buchanan, who later released the land to Irvine, fronting on the Allegheny, "about half a mile above the mouth of Buchaloon or Brokenstraw Creek, include Col. Brodhead's breastwork." Newbold-Irvine Papers. This confirms Obed Edson's statement published in *The Magazine of American History*, November, 1879, pp. 649-675.

to reside there since its advantages for settlement, its fertile fields and timber, its streams and access to river travel, remained just as attractive as ever. So it seemed to General Irvine when he first viewed the place six years later. Buckaloons, or Brokenstraw, was indeed just as the General described it, "a fine situation." He made a mental note to purchase land there when the area was opened for sale.

Returning from his western excursion, Irvine was elected to Congress for the term 1786–1788 and went to New York where its sessions were held. There, Robert Edge Pine painted him in his military uniform proudly decorated with the medal of the Society of the Cincinnati.¹²

In 1790, the General was a member of Pennsylvania's constitutional convention and was also appointed by Washington as a commissioner to settle the financial account between the government and the various states.¹³ Once again, he was elected to Congress.

During western Pennsylvania's Whisky Rebellion of 1794, General Irvine played a prominent part. In its early stages, he and Chief Justice Thomas McKean served as arbitrators in an effort to bring the rebels back to their senses. Later, as major general, he commanded the state's troops on the expedition which restored order.

In 1795, Irvine returned to northwestern Pennsylvania, where, together with surveyor Andrew Ellicott, he laid out the towns of Erie, Waterford, Warren, and Franklin. While on this tour, he revisited Brokenstraw, where he was virtually a property holder because he had obtained warrants for several tracts at the mouth of the creek in 1792. Indian troubles had prevented his doing much more until 1795, when the natives were at last quelled and the General had his holdings surveyed.

Not including a number of town lots in Warren, the General owned five tracts of land, all of them on the Allegheny. At the mouth of the Brokenstraw, on its southwestern bank he had 207 acres where the Indian village of Buckaloons may have been situated. On the other side of the Creek were 210 acres called Strawfield, which had been

¹² Butterfield, An Historical Account of the Expedition against Sandusky, xi.

¹³ His commission, dated Aug. 10, 1790, signed by both Washington and Jefferson, is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹⁴ Under the Act of 1792, which authorized the sale of the land north and west of the Allegheny River and the Conewango Creek, warrants for tracts at Brokenstraw were issued to Gen. Irvine in April, 1792.

granted to Charles Wilkins who conveyed them to Irvine. Adjoining this ground, was a tract supposed to be 200 acres but which was perhaps twice as large. The General had taken it out in the name of his friend General Thomas Buchanan of Carlisle, but Buchanan failed and the land came back to Irvine who had paid its original purchase price. Situated about a half mile above the Brokenstraw, this tract was usually identified as the site of Colonel Brodhead's breastworks. On the opposite side of the Allegheny, a little above the mouth of the Brokenstraw, Irvine had two more tracts, one of 473 acres known as

Receiver-General's Office, Philadelphia.

RECEIVED 26th day of April	_ 1792;
of William Owine.	the
fum of Fiftien pounds Specie	08.
for 200 acres of land, on the Miller	this Allian
Handwange buck in the worth New Prochase	~ 00
granted to the faid divine	
by warrant dated 25th Instant.	1- 110
£ 15.0.0 \$ fa S. Generalo. Fra Jolins.	

Williamsburg, and an adjoining piece of 474 acres called Hemlock Bottom. Up river, directly across from Warren, he owned 223 acres, Richland Bottom. None of these holdings were Donation Lands, but elsewhere he did own 1,000 acres of Donation Lands, as well as the 2,000 acres known as Irvine's Reserve at Harbor Creek and other smaller holdings in Erie. As he journeyed home, General Irvine doubtless congratulated himself on having laid a durable foundation for his family's fortune.¹⁵

In the years that followed this western trip, he held several important public offices and was ultimately appointed superintendent

¹⁵ A mass of papers supporting this data is to be found in the Callender Irvine Section, "Brokenstraw Farm" box, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

of military stores in Philadelphia by President Thomas Jefferson. From then on, he had charge of arsenals, ordnance, army supplies, and a hand in the government's Indian trade.¹⁶

Irvine's career in America attracted three of his brothers, two of whom came to Carlisle. Andrew Irvine served as a captain in the Pennsylvania Line, survived seventeen bayonet wounds at the Paoli Massacre, and died unmarried in Carlisle in 1789, aged forty. Matthew Irvine, the General's youngest brother, was studying medicine under him when the Revolution came on. He joined the army as a surgeon, ultimately serving in Lee's Legion, and after the war settled in Charleston, South Carolina. There he married Mary Keith, said to have been a descendant of the Anne Boleyn family. Dr. Matthew, noted for his wit and medical skill, died in Charleston in 1827, leaving no children. Finally, there was James Irvine, who married, had one or more children, and lived in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

To return to General William Irvine, he made a fortunate marriage, taking as his wife in the early 1770's Ann Callender, daughter of the formidable and distinguished Captain Robert Callender of Carlisle. The Callender connection was to prove an important one for the Irvines.

The Callender Family

Robert Callender was one of the most colorful and forceful figures of his day in Cumberland County. Like his Indian trader colleague George Croghan, he suffered severe financial loss when the French drove the Pennsylvania traders out of the Indian country. In the war that followed, Callender, in common with so many of the traders who

¹⁶ Several writers state that this appointment was made on Mar. 25, 1800. However, the commission for it, dated Mar. 25, 1801, is in the Mrs. Caryl Roberts-Irvine Papers. Irvine's was a Jeffersonian appointment which would not have been given to him by his enemies, the Federalists, in 1800. In some of his correspondence Irvine was addressed as "Agent in Charge of Indian Factories."

¹⁷ Sarah Woods Parkinson, *Memories of Carlisle's Old Graveyard* (Carlisle, 1930), 64; Rogers (1824 edition), 258.

¹⁸ According to Francis B. Heitman's *Historical Register of the Officers of the Continental Army* (Washington, 1914), 314, Matthew Irvine died Aug. 31, 1827. For a biographical sketch, see *PMHB*, V (1881), 418-424.

had lost their livelihood and who thirsted for revenge, saw much service. Family tradition has him present at Braddock's defeat in 1755, and in the ensuing years he played a leading part in frontier defense.

Speculating in land and trading ventures, Callender prospered and became a citizen of note in Carlisle, where he was a liberal contributor to all worthy civic movements. He married Mary Scull and had three daughters: Ann, who married General William Irvine; Elizabeth, who married Dr. John Andrews, provost of the University of Pennsylvania; and Isabella, wife of William Neill of Baltimore. After Mary Scull's death in 1765, Captain Callender married Frances Gibson of Carlisle, an aunt of Chief Justice John Bannister Gibson of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. By Frances, Callender had four more children: Robert, a lawyer who settled in Pittsburgh where he died unmarried in 1802; Martha, who married Judge Thomas Duncan of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania; Catharine, who married a Mr. Noland of Aldie, Virginia; and another daughter, who became the wife of one of the Thompsons of Carlisle. Captain Callender died at the age of fifty on July 29, 1776, and was buried, according to his wish, next to his first wife in the Carlisle cemetery. 19

General William Irvine's Children

So highly did General Irvine regard his father-in-law that he named his first child for him—Callender Irvine, born on January 24, 1775, a year before Robert Callender's death. Callender was the first of eleven children. The next two were girls, Ann, who never married, and Mary, who lived only a year.²⁰ Then followed William Neill Irvine, next to Callender the most distinguished of his generation. Trained as a lawyer, he entered the army for a brief period, returning to it as a colonel in the War of 1812, when he raised a regiment.

¹⁹ Dr. Irvine furnished this data to John B. Linn, who contributed it to William H. Egle's Notes & Queries Chiefly Relating to Interior Pennsylvania. Abstract in Newbold-Irvine Papers. In Robert Callender's will, dated July 26, 1776, it is directed that his body be interred "in the burying ground at Carlisle near the place where I buried my former wife." Copy of the will in ibid. Parkinson, 65.

²⁰ The birth dates and several of the death dates of the Irvine children are taken from the Irvine family Bible owned by Edwards Fayssoux Leiper, Jr. Ann's dates were Mar. 2, 1778–June 26, 1831, and Mary's, Nov. 1, 1780–Nov. 8, 1781. Parkinson, 65.

Twice he served as adjutant general of Pennsylvania, and in the last years of his life he was a judge. After his business failure in the 1820's, he moved from Carlisle to Gettysburg.²¹

Following William, the Irvines had two more daughters, Elizabeth, who married Dr. James Reynolds who died within three years, and Mary Bullen, who married Charles W. Lewis and had seven children, one of whom was killed at the Alamo.²² After this second Mary came Armstrong Irvine, an 1811 graduate of West Point. He served with distinction as a captain in the War of 1812 and died unmarried in 1817.²³ Rebekah Armstrong de Rosenthal came next. She married Captain Peter Simons Fayssoux of Charleston, South Carolina, and had eleven children.²⁴ After Rebekah, the Irvines had twins, James and John Woods. James's career is obscure. He died at Carlisle, apparently without having married. John Woods Irvine did not marry either. He practiced medicine at Irvine and died in Philadelphia in 1832.²⁵ The final child was Martha who was born in 1799 and lived for only two months.

Early Career of Callender Irvine

The lives of all General Irvine's children were to be closely influenced by his oldest son, Callender, whom they came to revere almost as much as their own father. Although he was to prove the rock on

- 21 G. A. Irvine Papers. William Neill Irvine was born on Nov. 1, 1782, and died on Sept. 26, 1854, at Harrisburg, where he was buried. He married Juliana Galbraith of Carlisle and had two sons, Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine, who died in Warren in February, 1867, leaving two or three daughters, and William C. Irvine, a clerk at the Schuylkill Arsenal who died about 1885, having had at least five children. See records of the Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Collection of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania.
- 22 Elizabeth was born on Jan. 3, 1786, and died on Aug. 26, 1864. Dr. Reynolds, whom she married on Aug. 29, 1805, died in 1808. They had no children. *American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 3, 1805. Mary Bullen was born on Mar. 26, 1788, married Charles W. Lewis on Oct. 4, 1805, and died Jan. 31, 1847. It was her son William Irvine Lewis who died at the Alamo.
- 23 Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army (Washington, 1903), I, 564.
- ²⁴ Callender Irvine Fayssoux to W. A. Irvine, New Orleans, Aug. 13, 1883, Newbold-Irvine Papers.
- 25 The twins were born on Oct. 28, 1796. James died May 2, 1848. Parkinson, 64. The records of Ronaldson's Philadelphia Cemetery show that John was buried there on Oct. 14, 1832.

which the family rested, his early life bore little promise of such stability. Not long before he was scheduled to graduate from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Callender announced his desire to quit the place. His studies were too exhausting. The General persuaded him to stay on, warning him about his uncle, Dr. Matthew Irvine: "Although your Uncle is a good classical scholar, a good physician & surgeon, yet he regrets exceedingly not having a diploma." ²⁶

After receiving his degree in 1794, Callender came to Philadelphia to read law under the guidance of Jared Ingersoll. The intended two-year course was no sooner taken up than it was relinquished. The young man did not want to be a lawyer. He preferred to accompany his father as a surveyor's assistant in the summer of 1795, when the General laid out Warren and the other towns. The following year he was at Pittsburgh on some undefined business that proved unsuccessful. There is an indication that his father had expected him to have visited the Brokenstraw area at that time.²⁷

At all events, in 1797, General Irvine conveyed land across from the mouth of that creek to Callender, and, early in the year, Callender set out with Tom, a Negro servant,²⁸ for the tract which he called "Brokenstraw Farm." There he built a log cabin,²⁹ planted three acres of corn, and fulfilled his father's desire—"The main object as things have turned out is to have legal settlement and improvement."³⁰

The frontier, where Callender farmed and fished for trout, had been made safe only two years earlier by Anthony Wayne's victory over the Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, but there were still more Indians about than whites. Such settlers as there were coveted Callender's land. On May 17, 1797, he wrote his father from Brokenstraw: "I wish to know as soon as possible what arrangements

²⁶ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, Feb. 22, 1793, Gen. Irvine Papers, XI, 74.

²⁷ Gen. Irvine to Gen. John Wilkins, May 9, 1796, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

²⁸ Tom had been a slave owned by Gen. Irvine, but freed by him after the Revolution. After an excursion to test his new-found freedom, Tom returned to the Irvine household and lived there until his death. Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, 421. The tract here mentioned was the 473-acre Williamsburg, on which the General had taken out a warrant in Callender's name on Apr. 5, 1792. Callender deeded it back to his father in 1796 and the patent was issued in the General's name, but on Mar. 7, 1797, he reconveyed it to Callender.

²⁰ "Callender Irvine's first house stood on the ground now occupied by the railroad station at Irvineton, but this was abandoned for higher ground after the memorable 'Pumpkin Flood' of 1805." J. S. Sehenck, *History of Warren County, Pennsylvania* (Syracuse, 1887), 402.

³⁰ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, June 12, 1797, Gen. Irvine Papers, XIV, 7.



GENERAL CALLENDER IRVINE IN 1820



DR. WHILIAM A. IRVINE IN 1824

you will make with regard to a continuation of the improvement already begun. It will be necessary in my opinion for some person to remain here all winter, as I am informed many men look upon Brokenstraw with a wishful eye, and are determined to take possession should an opportunity offer. There is a Mr. Andrews lives within two miles of me, a pretty decent man, & one other family about the same distance, & not many removes from savages. Tom behaves extremely well."³¹

Callender spent the following winter with his Uncle Matthew at Charleston. It was there that he received instructions from his father to be in Carlisle by mid-March so that he could start out for the Brokenstraw early in April.³² Callender complied, but a contemplated change of plans held him at Pittsburgh, where, in June, 1798, his father wrote him that the Secretary of War had commissioned him captain in a new regiment of artillery.³³ Obviously, this appointment was secured through General Irvine's influence.

Brokenstraw Farm was kept that year by Matthew Young, a tenant farmer who continued its improvements.³⁴ The inability of the Irvines to be present themselves inevitably brought on perplexing problems, especially when the place was unattended in wintertime. On December 7, 1799, Alexander McDowell of Franklin wrote Callender Irvine: "Your farm at Brokenstraw is getting much out of repair. The Indians are burning your rails and your peach trees & other trees will be exposed to cattle and everything else." ³⁵

Callender Irvine's career in the artillery was passed chiefly in the vicinity of Carlisle, and was hampered by a lengthy illness. During this time, his thoughts lay much with Brokenstraw Farm, and he undertook to expand the property by purchasing the hills which lay behind the flats and which were covered with valuable timber. Only a release from military duties could permit his return, and, it appears, he longed to see his farm again. As usual, it was his father who made the arrangements. Having gotten his son into the army, General

³¹ Callender Irvine to Gen. Irvine, Brokenstraw, May 17, 1797, ibid., 4.

³² Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, Jan. 10, 1798, ibid., 18.

³³ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, June 11, 1798, ibid., 25.

³⁴ Young was the founder of Youngsville, a few miles west of Irvine.

³⁵ Newbold-Irvine Papers.

³⁶ Gen. Irvine to Tench Coxe, Apr. 23, 1801, Gen. Irvine Papers, XV, 27.

Irvine proceeded to get him out. From Philadelphia on May 15, 1801, the General wrote Callender, who was at Carlisle, of a conversation with the Secretary of War. "I gave him a history of your long bad state of health, and that your physicians recommended traveling etc. Upon the whole conclude by saying it must be both the publics & your private advantage that your resignation should be accepted, and therefore request it may." Five days later, Callender Irvine was once again a civilian.

His marriage to Patience Elliott on December 22, 1801,³⁸ emphasized the necessity of settling down to something advantageous. And again his father's influence served him well. Part of the General's duties was supplying Indian agents with trading goods. When the agent for the Six Nations was relieved of his position, the General saw an opening for his son, and Callender got the job. So it was that in 1802, Callender and Patience went to Erie. His pay was only five hundred dollars, but his post was in the country where his father's lands were located and could serve as a steppingstone to something better.

As previously noted, General Irvine owned two thousand acres at Harbor Creek on Lake Erie, Irvine's Reserve, the gift of a grateful Pennsylvania for his wartime services. Since Callender's station was at Erie, he decided to exchange Brokenstraw Farm for part of his father's Reserve. The General was willing to make the "swop" by giving him a fourth of the Erie lands, General Irvine wrote him: "If you are determined to go to Brokenstraw to reside, laying off the 500 acres will be unnecessary." Actually, Callender remained at Erie, and, to his father's distress, the Brokenstraw tract was often unoccupied. "Brokenstraw must not be neglected," implored the General. Callender Irvine visited the place whenever he could. In the summer

³⁷ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, May 15, 1801, ibid., 38.

³⁸ See notes in Callender Irvine's Bible, owned by Mrs. Caryl Roberts and John L. Welsh, Ir.

³⁰ Originally, the state had given Irvine Montour's Island (Neville's Island), an island about six miles long and four miles below Pittsburgh, but the state's title to the island proving defective, the authorities gave him the Erie land instead.

⁴⁰ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, June 23, 1802, Gen. Irvine Papers, XV, 20.

⁴¹ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, Aug. 4, 1802, ibid., 83.

⁴² Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, Dec. 21, 1802, and May 12, 1804, ibid., 108, and XVI, 35.

of 1802, he held an Indian conference there with Handsome Lake, the Indian prophet, half-brother to the famous Seneca chieftain Cornplanter. The difficulty of maintaining the farm is suggested in a letter he wrote his father two years later: "There are now two settlers on our land, one above the other below the creek & a cabbin on Buchanans Tract [a Brokenstraw property that the Irvines were acquiring]. I have made every exertion to get those lands settled since I came here & have had two persons on the land, one of whom run away, the other proved more worthless." 45

In 1803, Callender's lawyer brother, William N. Irvine, came to Erie. The fact that Callender had settled down and was fitting himself to take his father's place in the family circle is reflected in a letter William wrote to their mother. "Callender is the counterpart of my honored father, one of God's brightest works, an honest man whom nothing could tempt to do an act dishonorable or mean." 46

The birth of his son William Armstrong Irvine at Erie on September 28, 1803, at "two of the clock in the morning" 47 may well have influenced Callender to seek a better living than that of Indian agent. Five days before Patience had her child, he sent in his resignation. Curiously enough, while his letter was en route to Washington, a new commission was on its way to Erie—Irvine had been appointed Surveyor of the Customs for the Port of Buffalo Creek (Buffalo, New York). His being in that general part of the world and having visited Buffalo Creek on Indian business probably accounted for this attention. However, it was not federal office that he wanted. Erie County was being established and General Irvine had procured for him, through the General's good friend Governor Thomas McKean, commissions for all its clerkships. Bewildered by his Buffalo Creek appointment and by a delay in the actual establishment of the Erie offices, Callender scarcely knew in what direction to turn. "Nothing must be done to hazard the state offices," warned his father, "they must be made the standby, unless something much superior should offer." And "something much superior" was at hand. Having made

⁴³ This conference is referred to in a letter from Handsome Lake to Callender Irvine, dated Aug. 29, 1803. Mrs. Caryl Roberts-Irvine Papers.

⁴⁴ Squatters illegally on the property.

⁴⁵ Callender Irvine to Gen. Irvine, Presque Isle, June 27, 1804, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁴⁶ William N. Irvine to Mrs. Ann Irvine, Presque Isle, Apr. 11, 1803, G. A. Irvine Papers.

⁴⁷ Notes in Callender Irvine Bible owned by Mrs. Caryl Roberts and John L. Welsh, Jr.

repeated efforts to establish his oldest son's career, the General indirectly provided him with just the right opening, although, sadly enough, it was only in the General's death that this was possible.⁴⁸

On July 29, 1804, William Irvine died in Philadelphia after a short illness at the age of sixty-three. His funeral was marked with all the testimonials of esteem and regret possible, and all the pomp and circumstance which the city could muster. From his home between Walnut and Locust on Eighth Street, his body was borne to the burial ground of the First Presbyterian Church in Market Street, of which he was a member, and there interred in the presence of numerous civic and military organizations and of the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati, of which he was president.⁴⁹

Callender Irvine Takes Over

The General's death precipitated a financial crisis for his large family, a crisis that was not solved by his will. The will stipulated that his house and lots in Carlisle, together with his household furniture, were to go to his wife. The rest of his lands were to be valued and divided between his wife and children. His two grown sons, Callender and William N., were named executors along with his wife and brother-in-law Thomas Duncan.

The difficulty was that the General was in debt at the time of his death and his major land holdings lay in a wilderness.⁵⁰ There was nothing in his estate to produce income. How was his widow to be cared for? And how were his seven dependent children to be fed, housed, clothed, and educated? The twins, John and James, were only eight years old, Rebekah but ten, Armstrong only twelve. The Irvines had always lived well and had a position to maintain, and

⁴⁸ Gen. Irvine to Callender Irvine, July 22, 1803, and Nov. 6, 1803, Gen. Irvine Papers, XVI, 8, 20. Callender Irvine Papers at the Buffalo Historical Society, microfilm owned by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

⁴⁹ Aurora, July 31, 1804, and Aug. 1, 1804. An epitaph written at this time, evidently for use on his tombstone, is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers. It reads: "Beneath this marble are deposited the remains of William Irvine, Esqr, a General Officer in the armies of the United States during the Revolutionary War. Alike staunch & firm in the Cabinet or the Field. He was among the *first* who stepp'd forward in the Counsels of his Country and among the *last* who retired from the Field in Defense of Her Peace, Liberty, & Safety. Let it also be recorded that his social & domestic Virtues were powerful rivals of those of his public character."

50 He owed about \$6,000. W. A. Irvine to W. C. Irvine, April, 1865, G. A. Irvine Papers.

this made their needs greater than those of an ordinary family. Fortunately, the General had many loyal friends. Influence exerted on behalf of the Irvines resulted in the Secretary of War, General Henry Dearborn issuing orders through channels. From Erie on November 28, 1804, Callender wrote General Dearborn: "I have this moment received a letter from Mr. Banger, Chief Clerk in the Intend[ency] of Military Stores Office, informing that you have been pleased to offer me the Inspection of clothing on the terms allow'd my father. I accept your friendly offer, sir, on those terms. I am now on the eve of leaving this country for Philadelphia."⁵¹

In December, the Irvines set forth on their journey. So wretched were the roads that a wheeled vehicle was impractical, and so Callender and his wife rode horseback. To protect his son from the bitter cold, the father bundled the year-old child in his military greatcoat and carried him in his arms. The one hundred and thirty mile trip to Pittsburgh took five days, during which it snowed. At Pittsburgh, they found an empty stage preparing to return to Philadelphia. Callender chartered it, removed the middle seat, installed bedding, and off they went on the second five-day leg of their travels.⁵²

Callender Irvine had come home, for Philadelphia was to be his home during the rest of his life. He had come home to take his father's place. On his salary of about \$1,800, he supported his brothers and sisters, educated them, and established their careers. His mother lived with him at his house, 431 Market Street, until her death on October 15, 1823,⁵³ and his spinster sister Ann presumably lived with him until her death, when she willed him her estate. Another sister, Elizabeth, returned to his home as a widow after her brief marriage, and lived there until Callender himself died. Rebekah's husband became his assistant in the commissary general's department. He found a clerkship for one of his brother William's sons at the Schuylkill Arsenal. In short, he behaved as a father to his brothers and sisters.

The burden of assuming the General's debts and of raising the family was heavy, despite the sale of about half the Erie land. By

⁵¹ Newbold-Irvine Papers.

^{52 &}quot;Early Pennsylvania Recollections," signed W. A. I., reprinted from Forney's *Progress* in the *Warren Ledger*, Sept. 15, 1882, p. 2.

⁵³ United States Gazette, Oct. 16, 1823.

In November 18th.

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LETTER OF CALLENDER IRVINE TO GENERAL DEARBORN

the time of his death, Callender owed some \$20,000 on this account.⁵⁴ Debt did not seem to worry him. He spent money freely on agricultural experiments and on horse breeding. He enjoyed the races at Saratoga, owned a large string of thoroughbred horses (thirty-eight at the time of his death), and lived very well.⁵⁵ In 1812 he was appointed Commissary General of the United States. So ably did he perform the duties of the office that each successive president reappointed him, and he held the post until he died.

His sense of family responsibility led him to acquire two lots in Ronaldson's Philadelphia Cemetery at Ninth and Bainbridge Streets. To one of the vaults he built there he conveyed in 1832 the remains of his father and mother, each reboxed in a new coffin. That year he also reinterred the body of his brother Captain Armstrong Irvine in the new vault, as well as that of his sister Ann. When his brother Dr. John W. Irvine died that fall, his corpse was carried to the same place. Ultimately, two more of his sisters were interred at Ronaldson's, and, in the course of time, the adjoining lot was opened to receive the bodies of Callender Irvine himself and his wife Patience. Having taken the best care of the family he could during their lifetimes, he had thus provided for them after death, but Ronaldson's was not to be the final resting place of the Irvines. By city action in 1950, the bodies were all removed to Forest Hills Cemetery, Somerton, and buried without any marker to show where they now lie. 57

Brokenstraw Farm, 1805-1825

The move to Philadelphia in no way lessened Callender Irvine's interest in Brokenstraw Farm. He maintained the place by leasing it to tenants, but this was not too satisfactory. Charles McNair, who

⁵⁴ W. A. Irvine to William N. Irvine, Irvine, Sept. 14, 1853, G. A. Irvine Papers.

^{55 &}quot;Memo of Blooded Stock Belonging to Callender Irvine in 1841," Newbold-Irvine Papers. In 1834, he employed the celebrated Edward Troye to paint his stallion "Busirus." Horse Account Ledger, *ibid*. A bill for another painting by Troye in 1841 is also in the collection.

⁵⁶ See bills of Peter Lesley and Samuel Louderback, April, 1832, for these services, Newbold-Irvine Papers. Callender Irvine had purchased the two lots from Ronaldson on Mar. 28, 1832. Deeds of sale, *ibid*.

⁵⁷ A list of those buried in the two Irvine lots was sent to Mrs. Thomas Newbold by Mrs. A. M. Cooley of Ronaldson's on Apr. 29, 1903. *Ibid*.

had the farm from about 1809 to 1813, made trouble and had to be dismissed. To take McNair's place, Irvine sent out Adam Shutt, an experienced Philadelphia County farmer. In June, 1814, Shutt signed a four-year lease for Irvine's "farm on the Allegheny River, called Brokenstraw." In turn, Irvine agreed to improve "the house now upon the farm," or, if necessary, to build him "a neat small farm house." Irvine also stocked the farm with oxen, horses, cows, and a herd of native sheep. To improve the breed, he procured merino rams and a ewe from E. I. duPont of Christiana Hundred, Delaware, and sent them out with Shutt. The new farmer and his family drove to Brokenstraw in a wagon Irvine provided. Because of the slow pace of the livestock which accompanied them, it took the Shutts twenty-five days to reach their destination.⁵⁸

Shutt ran the farm from 1814 to 1824 and perhaps longer, for he never left the neighborhood. His regime saw many improvements. In 1815, Irvine built him a frame house 20 x 42 feet in size, and that year saw a barn go up, 30 x 57 feet in dimensions, built of solid timber from the place. Departure bull arrived to improve the standard of the local cattle, and in 1816 E. I. duPont sent out a drove of sheep under John Doolan, who contracted to work at Brokenstraw for a year. Wheat, buckwheat, oats, rye, corn, potatoes, and wool were the produce of the farm at this time. Shutt's inventory dated December 14, 1819, discloses that he was in charge of eight oxen, thirteen steers, three calves, one bull, fifty-nine sheep, and five horses, besides which there must surely have been some cows. Gradually, more and more land was cleared. In 1821, a sheep house, stable, and granary were built.

Meanwhile, Irvine went on accumulating land. Adjoining his Brokenstraw holdings was the four-hundred-and-three-acre farm of John Andrews, who, from time to time, had supervised Irvine's tenants. Although Irvine had mentioned Andrews as a neighbor that summer of 1797 when he made his first improvement at Brokenstraw, it is possible that Andrews had not yet settled on the land next

⁵⁸ These facts are drawn from a mass of Brokenstraw papers in the Callender Irvine section of the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁵⁹ Adam Shutt to Callender Irvine, Brokenstraw, July 8, 1815, ibid.

⁶⁰ Agreement dated July 31, 1816, between duPont and Doolan, ibid

⁶¹ Receipt for \$249 for their building signed by Stephen Sweet, Brokenstraw, Aug. 23, 1821, ibid.

to his. An affidavit taken in 1817 states that "John Andrews commenced his improvements on the above described tract of land in the month of May, 1798, by ploughing & planting a field of corn... that he erected a house thereon for the habitation of man in the month of September, 1799, and resided thereon until the year 1815." At that time, he lost the farm through a sheriff's sale and it fell into the hands of Jacob Goodwin, who lived there with his family for several years. Goodwin's house was about 30 x 36 feet and he had a barn as well as other farm buildings. By this time eighty acres of the farm were cleared, fenced, and cultivated. In 1817, Irvine tried to purchase the former Andrews property from Goodwin, and also a

1
Treasury Office of Pennsylvania, une 10 1819
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50.67 Dollars. M. Musgrave Ticker for Reihard M. Crain Treasurer.
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Acquisition of the Homestead Tract

four-hundred-acre tract adjoining it to the south. Evidently, these transactions were not fully completed until two years later.⁶²

It is believed that Irvine had a summer home on the east side of Brokenstraw Creek, on the 210-acre Strawfield tract originally warranted to Charles Wilkins. If so, he let that property go to his brother Dr. John W. Irvine, who began to farm and improve it in 1816. Consequently, Callender Irvine needed a new house, and now at the Andrews farm he owned the ideal setting, a bluff overlooking the Allegheny. This spot was about a mile from the crossing of the Brokenstraw and just opposite Brokenstraw Island. Designs for his new building, carefully supervised by Irvine, were prepared, and in 1822 it was erected for him by Philo B. Palmer.⁶³

A surviving plan of the house shows that it was thirty feet wide as it faced the Allegheny and thirty-six feet deep, evidence that Irvine liked the proportions of the Goodwin house.⁶⁴ A porch on the riverside corresponded in position and width to an entry hall which ran the length of the house to the staircase. Opening into the hall from the north side were two rooms of identical size, nearly square in shape, each with its fireplace.⁶⁵ The ceilings of both first and second floors were ten feet high. Underneath the house was a deep cellar with six windows and substantial stone walls. Just south of this residence was another building. It, too, had a deep cellar with sturdy stone walls. This "back building" housed the kitchen and servants' quarters and was connected to the side door of the main building by a piazza. Near the side door was the entrance to the cellar and within a few yards was the well.⁶⁶

62 Adam Shutt to Callender Irvine, Brokenstraw, July 8, 1815, *ibid*. The 400-acre tract was acquired by Irvine in pursuance of a warrant dated June 10, 1819. A certificate for his payment of the patent fees on the Andrews farm, dated June 10, 1819, is in *ibid*., as are unexecuted agreement between Goodwin and Irvine dated May 7, 1817, and affidavit of Goodwin and James Andrews dated Sept. 30, 1817.

63 Callender Irvinc to William N. Irvine, Mar. 30, 1817, and Philo B. Palmer papers, *ibid*. 64 The old part of the house conforms closely to this plan in the Newbold-Irvine Papers. The writer paeed off the cellar under the old wing and found it to be 30' x 39', the discrepancy in size being at least partially explained by Callender Irvinc's order to make the dimensions slightly larger as he had failed to take into his initial calculations space lost by partition walls.

65 This part of the house has not been changed fundamentally, except for exterior ornamentation. Much original interior trim remains, particularly the handsome classical motif around the front door.

66 Part of this description of the house rests on a letter of Callender Irvine to Dr. W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, July 26, 1836. "Reflecting upon Margaret's movements a night or two

The style of architecture was classical, the Greek Revival style then popular in Philadelphia. For Some of the lumber used was paid for by grain from the farm, and when the two-and-a-half-story house was completed it was a credit to the countryside. It may have been at this time that the three large barns, which still stand, were erected a hundred and twenty-five yards south of the kitchen, two of them in line with the river bank, and the other behind them and at an angle, in the then approved mode of a scientific barnyard. The architectural features of the two river bank barns are also classical. While these structures were not designed to be a landmark for the river trade, the builder made the riverside façades far more handsome than the landward sides and did not waste any ornamentation on the barn to the rear, which could not be seen from the water.

Some years before he built his house, Callender Irvine had decided to capitalize on the thriving lumber trade which centered on Brokenstraw Creek. Fantastic amounts of white pine were being brought out annually and loaded on rafts which were marshaled below the Creek on Irvine's lee shore, "Brokenstraw Eddy," where the Pittsburgh "fleet" was formed. There was money to be had in the lumber trade, and money to be had from those who engaged in it.

To tap both these sources of revenue, Irvine decided to open a store for the trade of farmers and lumbermen. His storekeepers were also to engage in the lumber business. On April 23, 1816, Callender brought into partnership Robinson R. Moore of Philadelphia and Dr. John W. Irvine, his twenty-year-old brother, to whom he loaned the entire capital necessary for his participation. Moore and Irvine arrived at the Brokenstraw in June, 1816, built their general store on the eastern side of the creek, and went into business with goods shipped to them from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The place was

ago, it occurred to me that she was in danger of falling through the cellar door, often carelessly left open in the piazza." Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁶⁷ When the building was later enlarged, a white Greek column was made to do duty as an attic beam. Most likely, it had originally served as a support for the front porch.

⁶⁸ Callender Irvine owned a copy of *The Complete Grazier or Farmer's and Cattle-Breeder's*, and Dealer's Assistant (London, 1816). Its frontispiece, "Plan of a Farm Yard and Offices," is similar to the Irvine arrangement.

⁶⁹ The original articles of agreement as well as the bond, dated Apr. 26, 1816, between Callender and John Woods Irvine, whereby Callender loaned John \$1,000, are in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

rapidly assuming greater importance. In 1818, a bridge was built. This, naturally, pleased Callender Irvine. He subscribed ten dollars "towards defraying the expenses of erecting a bridge of the Brokenstraw near the mouth of the said Creek." ⁷⁰

The store was to continue at the bridge for a long while, but Moore and Dr. John W. Irvine terminated their partnership in 1820. Moore returned to Philadelphia, while Dr. John remained to practice medicine in the vicinity for the next ten years.⁷¹ During this time, he helped keep an eye on brother Callender's interests, and occasionally was assisted in such tasks by other members of his family, including his brother James and his first cousin William Irvine Lewis.



HEADING ON 1816 BILL FOR PITTSBURGH GLASS

A change of title for the lands in which the family as a whole were interested occurred in these years. In 1823 or 1824, William N. Irvine, the next to oldest brother, failed. Legal complications threatening, Horace Binney advised all the brothers and sisters to deed over to Callender Irvine in trust their interest in General William Irvine's lands. Callender was to sell real estate when he could and to distribute the proceeds after deducting taxes and expenses. However, although he did sell land, he never was able to pass on the sales price. There were reasons for this. For one, his brothers John and

70 Ibid.

71 Dr. John W. Irvine was the first resident physician in the Township of Brokenstraw. Schenck, 415. One of his medical ledgers for his work there is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

72 Opinion of Horace Binney, dated May 7, 1824, and original deed of trust signed by Irvine's brothers and sisters, dated June 5, 1824, whereby they convey to him their interest in their father's lands in the counties of Eric, Crawford, Warren, Venango, and Mercer in Pennsylvania, and in Warren County, Ohio, are in *ibid*.

73 John W. Irvine's release was in the form of an indenture, dated Oct. 26, 1819, for the consideration of \$3,000. *Ibid.*

James conveyed to him their interest in the estate. This they did either for benefits received or for a price. His sister Mary also gave up her share to him, and his sister Ann bequeathed him her portion. This left outstanding only the shares of his sister Elizabeth, who lived with Callender and was much indebted to him, of his brother William N. Irvine and his sister Rebekah. Actually, the expenses of carrying the estate, paying taxes and warding off law suits, all of which Callender paid, went far toward canceling his brothers' and sisters' shares in the estate, particularly when the cost of their care and education as children, which he had borne, and his payment of General Irvine's debts were taken into consideration.

At all events, Callender Irvine carefully guarded the Brokenstraw land. Ultimately, it was all to go to his son. One part of it Callender and Patience Irvine deeded over to him on May 2, 1825. This was the 210-acre Strawfield Farm at the mouth of the Brokenstraw on its eastern side. Callender's brother John had farmed it for some years, but had evidently laid aside his plan to make the place his home.⁷⁴

Early Life of Dr. William A. Irvine

Callender's son and only child received his education in Philadelphia. In 1811, he attended Peter S. Chazotte's Seminary together with his uncles James and John, who were only seven years older than he. By 1816, he was a student at Sanderson's Seminary. Surviving school books show that he studied French, Latin, Greek, and geometry, and that while at Sanderson's he took up the violin. Dr. Irvine was to keep a violin by him for the rest of his life.⁷⁵

History, particularly that of the American Revolution, made a deep impression on him. His father told him stories he had had from the General, and the boy played among the ruins of Redoubt No. 10, built by the British army of occupation in 1777 to guard the northern approaches to Philadelphia.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ The original deed for this transaction of May 2, 1825, is in ibid.

⁷⁵ School books from the Irvine family library now at the HSP. Dr. Irvine's violin was still at the homestead in 1963.

⁷⁶ PMHB, IV (1880), 182.

Finishing school, William emulated his grandfather and his uncles Matthew and John by taking up the study of medicine. At the University of Pennsylvania, he received instruction in anatomy from Dr. Philip Syng Physick, and was under the particular guidance of the popular Dr. Nathaniel Chapman. On April 8, 1824, he received his degree of Doctorem in Arte Medica.⁷⁷

Medicine, however, was not to be his pursuit. He wanted to be an agriculturist on a large scale, as his father's friend General John Armstrong wrote of him in a letter of introduction to James Wadsworth, owner of a great estate at Geneseo. William had inherited all his father's feeling for Brokenstraw; there he would find his fortune.

He had spent many happy summers on the farm and had watched the place grow and prosper under Callender's skilled supervision. And how he had enjoyed the ten-day jaunt from Philadelphia! Rising early in the morning, he would mount a good horse and ride ten or fifteen miles to a breakfasting house. Then, on again another fifteen miles when it was time to feed the horses and rest them for two hours during the heat of the day. Remounting, another fifteen miles, more or less, brought him to his haven of rest for the night. And what inns there were! Who could forget the venison to be had at Reimer's, the mountain mutton at Graham's of Stoystown in Somerset County, the trout cooked to perfection at Miles' of Bellefonte!⁷⁹

In 1825, Dr. William A. Irvine rode the familiar route to his new home. Boxes and crates of supplies and household goods followed him sufficient to make his house, presumably Callender Irvine's new house, comfortable as a year-round residence. The contents of one of the crates, while new, had nevertheless an interesting history which a Pittsburgh businessman passed on to Dr. Irvine: "By request of our mutual friend Mr. G. Armitage of Philada I will forward you tomorrow with some articles intended for you at Messrs Boggs & Menshall's, a box containing a bedstead curtains etc which was made here & used only by our illustrious guest Genl La Fayette." With

⁷⁷ Card of admittance to the course dated Dec. 6, 1821, Mrs. Caryl Roberts-Irvine Papers. Dr. Irvine's medical diploma is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁷⁸ John Armstrong to Gen. Wadsworth, Apr. 11, 1825, ibid.

⁷⁹ Warren Ledger, Sept. 15, 1882, p. 2, as previously cited.

⁸⁰ James A. Bartram to W. A. Irvine, Pittsburgh, June 8, 1825, Newbold-Irvine Papers. Lafayette, the nation's guest, on his visit to the United States in 1824 and 1825 arrived at Pittsburgh on May 30, 1825, and left for Eric on June 1. J. Bennett Nolan, Lafayette in America Day By Day (Baltimore, 1934), 289–290.



SARAH JANE DUNCAN AS A CHILD



Callender Irvine, Jr.

the Lafayette bed assembled in one of the bedrooms, his copy by Bass Otis of his grandfather's portrait hung in the parlor, his medical texts and other books shelved in the library, Dr. Irvine was ready to improve his estate at Brokenstraw, or Irvine, as the place was now being called. He had enormous capacity for work and boundless energy. These he threw with enthusiasm into the task which lay before him.

Near the mouth of the Brokenstraw, he erected a sawmill⁸¹ and a gristmill. To provide power for these operations, he dammed the creek, forcing its water into a forebay which he excavated. At the eastern end of the dam was a chute over which lumber rafts plunged in times of high water. The fill from the forebay was used to create an embankment to hold the race down to the mills. This embankment was continued for the tail race out to the Allegheny.⁸²

For some years, Dr. Irvine enjoyed the company and advice of his uncle Dr. John W. Irvine, but about 1831 Dr. John became ill and returned to Philadelphia, where he died in 1832. Since William A. Irvine was too busy with his farm and mills to provide medical service for the community, another doctor was needed for Brokenstraw Township and his first cousin Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine came out for that purpose. However, before long he too went into business as partner to Dr. William A. Irvine in running the store at Brokenstraw bridge.

Dr. Irvine paid annual visits to his parents in Philadelphia. On these occasions he saw many of his relatives, for the family bond was strong. Among those whom Dr. Irvine met at his father's house was a frail but lovely young girl named Sarah Jane Duncan. Her father was a nephew of Judge Thomas Duncan, one of General William Irvine's executors. As fate would have it, the influence of the Duncans on the history of Irvine was to be profound.

⁸¹ The bill for this mill, signed by Benjamin Durlin on Sept. 4, 1826, is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁸² W. A. Irvine to Gabriel Heisler, Surveyor General, Mar. 30, 1830, ibid.

⁸³ Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine is said to have received his degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1831. He practiced not only in Brokenstraw but also in Warren, where he died in February, 1867, aged 56. Warren Mail, Feb. 23, 1867, as cited in Irvine family notes, Warren County Historical Society.

The Duncan Family

The Duncans of Carlisle had been on close terms with General William Irvine. One of them, David Duncan, was his partner in western land speculations during the 1780's. The patriarchs of the Duncan branch which was to prove so consequential to future generations of Irvines were Stephen Duncan and his wife Ann, both of whom died in 1794. They had seven children, the oldest of whom was the Thomas Duncan who married Robert Callender's daughter Martha, thereby becoming General Irvine's brother-in-law. Thomas Duncan's brother John also made a good marriage, taking as his bride Sarah Eliza Postlethwaite, the daughter of another first family of Carlisle. The same of the carlisle of Carlisle.

John and Sarah Eliza Duncan had five children in rapid succession—Matilda Rose, Stephen, Samuel Postlethwaite, Mary Ann, and Amelia, called Emily. Emily was born in 1793, four months before her father repaired to a woods behind the Carlisle barracks to fight a duel. General Irvine in Philadelphia was informed of this event by a letter from a close friend: "This moment we have disagreeable news—a duel has just been fought by James Lamberton and John Duncan in which the latter fell. The bullet went in his right eye. He expired in a few minutes. I have just sent for the coroner to have an inquest held, and his corps removed from the Barracks where he now lies. I saw your lady with poor Mr. & Mrs. Duncan." 87

The widow Duncan subsequently married Colonel Ephraim Blaine, who was John Duncan's second in the duel. ss Colonel Blaine died in 1804, after which Mrs. Blaine left Carlisle with her daughters

⁸⁴ Stephen Duncan's dates were 1729—Mar. 30, 1794, and his wife's were Dec. 13, 1731—Dec. 19, 1794. Parkinson, 94.

⁸⁵ The children were Thomas, Lucy wife of Jonathan Walker, Ann wife of Samuel Mahan, John, Robert, James, and Stephen, Jr. "Abstracts of Cumberland County, Penna. Wills, 1750–1800," 420, Collections of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁸⁶ Her parents were Samuel and Matilda Postlethwaite.

⁸⁷ Thomas Buchanan to Gen. Irvine, Carlisle, June 22, 1793, Newbold-Irvine Papers. John Duncan's dates were Nov. 15, 1762-June 22, 1793. Parkinson, 64.

⁸⁸ PMIIB, XLVI (1922), 173. Col. Blaine's dates were 1741-1804. Carlisle Old and New (Harrisburg, 1907), 109-110.

Matilda and Emily to make her home at 357 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

Her son Stephen, after preparing himself for a career in medicine, sought his fortune in the south, a step which brings in again the name of Robert Callender. Callender, it will be recalled, speculated in land. In 1768, he obtained a tract of two thousand acres about sixty miles below Natchez on the Mississippi River at the Great Cliffs, later called Loftus' Cliffs. ⁸⁹ Wars and title uncertainties prevented both Callender and, for many years, his executors from doing any thing about this property.

On January 22, 1802, General Irvine, one of Callender's executors, wrote Robert Callender, Jr.: "Respecting the land on the Mississippi, I have enquired of officers and other intelligent men who have seen it. All agree it is very valuable. 90 The only difficulty in my mind is how the treaty between the British and Spaniards is construed—viz are the Spaniards bound to recognize British titles. I have had thoughts of employing an agent to make the necessary enquiry, indeed I have delayed it only in hopes of finding some person on the spot to save expence unavoidably attending such a long journey. If that cannot be effected before Mr. Noland goes into the country, he can inquire so far as to satisfy himself, and on his return make his proposals to the executors, who on consulting the family will promptly determine."91

Whether Mr. Noland, who had married Robert Callender's daughter Catharine, made any proposals toward taking over the tract is unknown. What next appears is that the Duncan family took an active interest in the Mississippi lands and that one of them, Jesse Duncan, a lawyer, went out to Natchez where he died in 1804, aged twenty-two.⁹² Title problems had ceased to be a worry after 1803, for in that year Spain ceded the territory to France and France

⁸⁹ An exemplified copy of this grant of Dec. 6, 1768, by George III to Robert Callender is in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁹⁰ In a subsequent letter, Gen. Irvine gave reasons why the tract was valuable: "Fort Adams is on it & it is a Port of entry." Irvine to James Hamilton of Carlisle, Philadelphia, Nov. 11, 1803, Hamilton Papers, HSP.

⁹¹ Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁹² James Dunlap to Thomas Duncan, Natchez, Mar. 17, 1804, Mrs. Caryl Roberts-Irvine Papers; Katherine Duncan Smith, *The Story of Thomas Duncan and His Six Sons* (New York, 1928), 13.

sold it to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. This cleared the way for Mrs. Blaine's son Stephen, who began his career as a sugar and cotton planter at or near the Callender grant.

Family lore records Dr. Stephen Duncan's marriage to a Carlisle girl, who died leaving him a daughter who, in turn, died young in the south from a snake bite. 93 Next, Stephen married Margaret Ellis of Louisiana and had two more children at Homo Chillo below Natchez John Ellis Duncan, born August 3, 1812, and Sarah Jane Duncan, born July 14, 1814.91 Their mother died about 1820 and Stephen married again, this time to Catharine A. Bingaman of Natchez. Having prospered extraordinarily and being well on the way to a huge fortune, he transferred his headquarters to Natchez. There, on a princely tract of four hundred city acres, he built "Auburn," a great mansion which still stands, and there he began to raise another family. His son Henry Postlethwaite Duncan was born at Natchez in August, 1823.95 Later came Maria, who married Julius J. Pringle of Charleston, Samuel P., Charlotte B., a son Stephen, who died in Philadelphia at the age of three in 1833, and, finally, a second Stephen who lived to inherit "Auburn." 96

Dr. Stephen Duncan's success in Mississippi encouraged members of his family to join him at Natchez. Among these were his uncle Stephen Duncan, his father's younger brother, and his own brother Samuel Postlethwaite Duncan. Later came Dr. James Gustine of Carlisle, who had married Dr. Duncan's sister Mary Ann in 1808. Dr. Gustine practiced medicine at Natchez for the rest of his life. Another Dr. Gustine, Samuel, brother of James, also came south and became an extensive planter near Natchez, the owner of two hundred slaves.⁹⁷

⁹³ See letters of Mrs. Clifford Weaver to Miss Esther L. Newbold, July 16, 1941, and Aug. 16, 1941, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁹⁴ Baptismal Records of Second Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

⁹⁵ Henry P. Duncan of Natchez died in New York on Dec. 6, 1879. His body was sent to Philadelphia for burial in Laurel Hill. New York Times, Dec. 8, 1879. He had married Mary Sargent of Philadelphia on Oct. 5, 1847. See letter of Anderson Dana to Mrs. Clifford Weaver, Jan. 20, 1942, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁹⁶ In July, 1843, the famous silhouette artist August Edouart cut likenesses of Stephen Duncan and of S. D. Duncan of Natchez, and also of Samuel P. Duncan. Mrs. F. Neville Jackson, Ancestors in Silhouette (London, 1921), 202; Smith, 48.

⁰⁷ Dr. James Gustine died about 1845 leaving five children: Samuel, Sarah, Rebecca A., Matilda D., and Margaret Duncan. Gustine Courson Weaver, The Gustine Compendium

Following the death of his second wife, Stephen Duncan had placed her children John and Sarah in the custody of his sister Emily, who cared for them at her mother's house in Philadelphia. There they were visited by their father during his annual trip north to escape the heat of southern summers. Although so much away from them, Stephen cherished these children. He was in every respect an exemplary father and took his responsibilities seriously.

The Blaine household, where John and Sarah were brought up, was an intensely religious one. Its members attended Dr. Henry A. Boardman's Presbyterian Church and were always impressed with the mysteries and love of God. No one more so than Sarah. The death of her brother John on September 13, 1829, at New Haven, where he was a member of the Yale junior class, deepened her sense of religious fatalism. A studious girl, she attended the Philadelphia High School for Young Ladies. In nine courses, with pupils ranging in number from sixteen to thirty-four, she ranked first in five, second in three, and third in the other. 99

Dr. William A. Irvine fell in love with Sarah. In 1833, he visited her at Natchez, and, in a ceremony dampened by the death of her young half-brother Stephen, he married her on October 14 of that year. The marriage had her father's blessing. Dr. Stephen Duncan gave Sarah \$112,500 in Mississippi bank stocks paying large dividends.¹⁰⁰

Sarah Irvine and Her Children

The Irvines bought a house next to Grandmother Blaine's, and spent their summers at Irvine, where Sarah established a Sunday school and longed for a church in the vicinity. The Doctor continued

⁽Cincinnati, 1929), 48, 88-89, 108. In the records of Philadelphia's Tenth Presbyterian Church, Matilda D. Gustine's marriage to Charles P. Leverich of New York is recorded on Sept. 17, 1839.

⁹⁸ This date for John Ellis Duncan's death is supported by a newspaper clipping of the day and a draft of a proposed inscription for his monument. Newbold-Irvine Papers.

⁹⁹ Her report card of possibly 1831, addressed to Emily Duncan, ibid.

¹⁰⁰ S. Duncan to Emily Duncan, Natchez, Feb. 26, 1861, ibid.

to manage and improve the estate. During their Philadelphia sojourns, Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine had charge of the place.

On May 12, 1835, the Irvines' first child, Margaret Ellis, was born in Philadelphia. After "Minnie's" advent, Sarah's health seemed to decline, and, by the time she was "expecting" again, was almost precarious. In February, 1838, her father-in-law wrote Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine: "Dr. Irvine would go out if he could. It is not, however, in his power at this time. Mrs. Irvine has been in delicate health for months, keeps her bed now principally." Three weeks later, on



Margaret Ellis Irvine, 1838

Washington's Birthday, Sarah had a son who was named Callender in honor of his grandfather.¹⁰²

Dr. Irvine was eager to return to Brokenstraw Farm, to quit Philadelphia and to make Irvine his full-time residence. By June, his wife and infant child were able to travel and, fundamental decisions having been made, they put their Philadelphia house and its furniture up for sale and took their departure. Transportation for the road to Irvine had improved by 1838 and the Irvines had but to go to the Merchants' Exchange at Dock Street to take their places in the new railroad cars. The cars were drawn by horses up the Schuylkill and

¹⁰¹ Callender Irvine to Dr. G. A. Irvine, Feb. 2, 1838, G. A. Irvine Papers.

¹⁰² The dates of the Irvines are authenticated in the Irvine family Bible owned by Mrs. Caryl Roberts and John L. Welsh, Jr., and on the tombstones at the Irvine Church.

across the Columbia Avenue bridge, where the horses were unhitched and the cars towed by cable to the top of Belmont plateau. There a steam engine awaited them. Puffing and chugging, this contrivance hauled the travelers to Columbia on the Susquehanna. From there they pursued their way by canal and railroad until at length they came to Pittsburgh. Dr. Irvine reported the progress of the trip to his parents—young Callender was well, though his bowels were a bit loose, Minnie had been bitten by some bugs, Sarah was well.¹⁰³ From Pittsburgh, the Irvines completed the run to Irvine on a steamboat, steamboats having first ascended the Allegheny to Warren only a few years earlier.

So, on a June day in 1838, Sarah Irvine returned to the house that her father-in-law had built on the Allegheny near Brokenstraw Creek. On hand to greet her were Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine and his assistant in the store, Callender Lewis, another one of her husband's first cousins. Sarah came with high purposes. If Irvine was to be her home, a church must be built. The Sunday school must be reinstituted. Books should be provided for a library to raise the cultural level. Sarah brought many books with her, some of them going-away presents, such as the Rev. W. Goddard's The British Pulpit: Consisting of Discourses by the Most Eminent Living British Divines in England, Scotland, and Ireland (Philadelphia, 1838). This book bore the inscription "Mrs. Dr. Irvine—With the affect. regards of her friend & Pastor, H. An. Boardman. Philad. June 7th 1838." 104

Before long, the Irvines were comfortably established in their house, which was furnished with many refinements, including carpets for the stairs with rods to hold them in place, new curtains, and other luxuries. In the front parlor, was Sarah's piano, with which she no doubt accompanied the Doctor's violin. The back room was evidently used as the dining room. There was also a library, which may have been at the end of the entry. Dr. and Mrs. Irvine occupied the front bedroom looking out over the river, and young Callender and his nurse Anne were in the back bedroom. A few months later, the

¹⁰³ Several of these letters of W. A. Irvine to his parents are in the Newbold-Irvine Papers.

104 This book, together with others mentioned in this paper, was taken from the library in the Irvine homestead for presentation to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1963.

^{105 &}quot;If you shut up your house, would it not be well to send the piano down, for if Min is to learn she ought to have it to practise on." Emily Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Sept. 24, 1840, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

attic was divided into three rooms and Anne and Callender moved there.¹⁰⁶

Fighting hard against homesickness, Sarah wrote letters every week to her Aunt Emily Duncan. On August 17, 1838, she was happy to report: "I am sure you will be pleased to hear that an agreement has been made with an honest Scotchman of the name of Short to build our little church, & he promises to have it finished by Dec 1st. I was quite satisfied with the proposed log church; but the Dr. seems to have his heart set on stone. Short is a stone mason & his son-in-law is to do the carpenter work. Their estimate is \$900, independent of the benches & pulpit." Actually, the church was not completed at the appointed time, but its solid stone walls were up and the building roofed before winter set in.

Another source of satisfaction to Sarah was the arrival of a professional gardener, a competent elderly bachelor who bore the same name as General William Irvine's aide-de-camp, John Rose. He went right to work laying out the grounds and establishing the gardens in a pattern that was to last as long as the place was kept up.¹⁰⁸

"He is now destroying the piggery," Sarah wrote Aunt Emily on August 31, "as the vegetable garden is to be taken off of what now forms a part of the barn yard & is separated from the present garden by a thick line of honey locusts. We have great improvements in prospect. . . . You say you are disappointed that we have not an ice house. I tho't I had written the Doctor had a boy digging for an ice & milk houses & Short is to build them this fall (very soon). We are on a bank & they are very near the house, excavated from the bank. . . . Elsie has undertaken our entire washing & ironing, churning & whole superintendence of the milk, for which she receives \$1.50 per week, has her cow pastured & driven in & out with ours. She lives in a cabin of the Doctor & has her wood free of any expense. . . . She has some other privileges & I think \$1.50 sufficient compensation. Her husband works on the premises & receives about \$150 a year." 109

¹⁰⁶ This description is based on a series of letters written from Irvine by Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Dunean in 1838. *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Duncan, Irvine, Aug. 17, 1838, *ibid*. The cornerstone of the church was laid in September. Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Duncan, Sept. 14, 1838, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁹ Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Duncan, Irvine, Aug. 31, 1838, ibid.

The servants quartered at the kitchen in 1838 included Nancy the cook, a nine-year-old Dutch girl who helped her and waited on table, a boy Jerry who carried wood, did odd jobs, and assisted the gardener who also lived there, a German who took care of the cows, pigs, and poultry, and two farm hands. Some months later, Mrs. Patience Budge arrived to fill the office of housekeeper at \$1.50 a week.

Sarah's Sunday school record book details an activity she considered vital.¹¹⁰ On August 12, 1838, she made this entry in it: "This was the first Sabbath on which our school was reopened. May the Lord bless our school & make it the means of bringing precious souls to a knowledge of the Saviour." Seven pupils attended that day. Two weeks later, when Sarah opened her library, there were thirteen scholars, and their number rose rapidly to more than thirty.

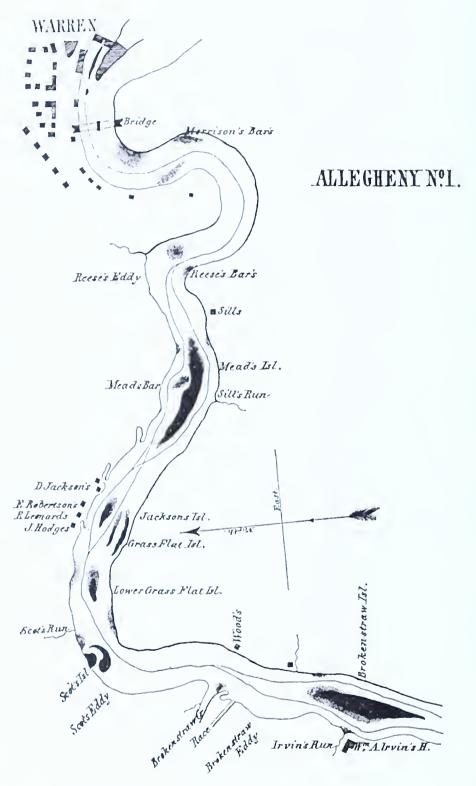
As cold weather set in, Sarah's health declined. Her final Sunday school session was held on November 11. Dr. Irvine became alarmed. He determined to take Sarah to Natchez for the winter while there was still enough water in the river. But Sarah improved and the plan was laid aside for a possible alternate, that of taking her overland to Philadelphia in February in a stage mounted on runners like a sleigh. Sarah was again pregnant and in a wretched condition. Still, she was able to preside over a Merry Christmas despite seven degree below zero weather. She served boiled turkey with oyster sauce and ice cream; "I do like to keep up Christmas, & our dinner was so fine it astonished the gentlemen, I believe." Among Sarah's Christmas books were Mrs. Sigourney's Letters to Mothers, and John Angell James' The Christian Professor Addressed.

Her religion sustained her during her sufferings of that long winter. Introspective and abed, she worried about her husband who was so constantly occupied with business affairs. To her aunt, she wrote on January 11, 1839: "Away from the cares & temptations of a city life I have more time to think & feel, & do sometimes feel deeply that my dearest friend is not yet a partaker of the hope & faith of a Christian. Do pray earnestly for us both: oh, if I could only be more faithful & consistent, more earnest & heartbroken for him before a throne of grace. It is all he needs to make him all that is desirable & excellent." 112

¹¹⁰ The book is in ibid.

¹¹¹ Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Duncan, Dec. 14, 1838, and Dec. 28, 1838, ibid.

¹¹² Newbold-Irvine Papers.



Course of the Allegheny River from Warren to Dr. Irvine's House

In April, the portrait she had requested of her Grandmother Blaine arrived to her infinite joy: "You know not how delighted I am to have that picture. . . . We think it a good likeness, the eyes & nose are your own & all, except the lips are more compressed than is natural to you." The next month, her beloved Aunt arrived, accompanied by a nurse, and on May 19 her daughter Sarah Duncan Irvine was born.

Aunt Emily planned to remain only several weeks, for she was needed at home because her mother was an invalid. But Sarah failed to rally and Emily stayed on. The Doctor wrote his father on June 28: "Sarah is now lying by me in a very critical condition. Her relapse has been a severe one indeed. She is today nearly exhausted, lethargic, and her mind wandering. Without some immediate change her recovery is impossible." On June 29, he added a postscript: "Dear Sarah lies now nearly insensible, her end cannot be far off. I have no expectation of her surviving. It is a heavy blow to me, breaking up the plans of a life." A few hours later she died.

It is said that Sarah's funeral sermon was the first one preached at the still unfinished Irvine church, 115 a church which owed its existence to her. Just above the little building, on ground selected by her husband for a family burial plot, she was interred under a marble slab which bears her name and informs the curious that she was in her twenty-fifth year at the time of her death. "Her Christian character was so matured," wrote Dr. Boardman, "her zeal for religion so enlightened, fervent, & fruitful, & her temper under her repeated & protracted sicknesses so patient & submissive, that we are happily left in no uncertainty as to her preparation for her last change."116 Many years later, in 1884, when Dr. Irvine revisited "Auburn" in Natchez for the first time since 1833, he wrote his daughter Minnie: "I have a vivid remembrance of every locality and spot around the house. Whilst pleasant in some respects as recalling your mother, I cannot but think of the many dreary years I passed in early life when deprived of her sweet society."117

¹¹³ Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Mrs. Sarah E. Blaine, Irvine, Apr. 5, 1839, ibid.

¹¹⁴ Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹¹⁵ This story has been handed down in the family, and it is undoubtedly true because it was printed as early as 1855 by E. L. Babbitt in his *Allegheny Pilot* (Freeport, 1855), 10. Babbitt knew Dr. Irvine.

¹¹⁶ Dr. H. A. Boardman to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, July 7, 1839, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹¹⁷ W. A. Irvine to Mrs. Margaret Biddle, Natchez, Mar. 2, 1884, ibid.

Following Sarah's funeral, Emily Duncan hastened home, while from Philadelphia, General Callender Irvine and his wife hurried out to Brokenstraw Farm. There Patience Irvine had a stroke and lost the use of her limbs. Her sister-in-law Mrs. Mary Lewis came to her aid. After some months, Mrs. Irvine was able to return east. Meanwhile, her son committed his three children to the care of Emily Duncan, who, having raised two of her brother's children, now undertook to be foster mother for the three young Irvines at their great-grandmother Blaine's house. "What do you think," wrote Minnie to her father. "We have the picture of my own dear mother hanging in our room taken when she was a little girl, & we think Callender like it." 118

It must have been a lonely winter for Dr. Irvine, his wife dead, his three children in Philadelphia. He wrote a letter to them which they were to read when they were older. Its purpose was to remind them of their mother's virtues, and with it he enclosed a packet of letters received by him immediately after her death from writers who had known Sarah best. "The little packet contains some letters," the Doctor added, "from your grandfathers Irvine & Duncan; two from my cousins Mary B. Leiper (who was your mother's dearest friend) & E. Campbell—one from your grand aunt Lewis, but principally from your kind aunt Emily Duncan; and I have made up the packet principally on her account to show you how warm an interest she took in you when helpless. She was indeed your mother's mother, and stood ready to transfer to you all the love she bore her." 119

In 1842, Dr. Irvine reclaimed his son from Emily Duncan and took the boy back to Irvine. From then on he kept him mostly under his own roof. The girls continued in Philadelphia where the Duncan family circle began to dwindle. In January, 1848, Emily's sister, Matilda, died and was buried at Laurel Hill. The death of Emily's mother, Mrs. Blaine, on August 16, 1849, caused Emily to close the house at 357 Walnut Street and move to New York, where she could be near her widowed sister Mrs. Mary Ann Duncan Gustine, and the latter's daughters—Margaret, who had married Henry Leverich, and Matilda, married to his brother Charles P. Leverich. 120

¹¹⁸ Emily's letter of acceptance to W. A. Irvine for this task is dated Aug. 8, 1839. *Ibid.* M. F. Irvine to Dr. W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, June 8, 1840, *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ W. A. Irvine to Margaret, Callender, and Sarah Irvine, Irvine, Nov. 14, 1839, *ibid*. 120 An obituary of Sarah E. Blaine appeared in the *North American and United States Gazette*, Aug. 17, 1849. For other details about Duncan family burials see Laurel Hill records; Weaver, 88-89.

While Margaret and Sarah continued their education in New York, their brother received private tutoring at Irvine. He was a very fine boy, the apple of his father's eye, a manly sportsman who ranged the hills and fields with his gun. When only ten years of age, he had written Mrs. Blaine of a hunting excursion to shoot blackbirds for his father who was ill in bed with a cold.¹²¹

One day in the spring of 1850, twelve-year-old Callender sat on a large block of stone which bordered the drive connecting the house and the barns. The boy toyed carelessly with his loaded gun. To the horror of those nearby, the gun went off. Moments later his distraught father penned a hasty note to Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine in

Overuse New yord to His Emile Director that Callender Jacci de lathe shot himself flead a few minutes since what my august 4.

Dr. Irvine Announces His Son's Death

Warren: "Dear Sir, Please Telegraph to No 190 2nd Avenue New York to Miss Emily Duncan that Callender accidentally shot himself dead a few minutes since. What my anguish is no one can conceive but those who know his noble nature. W. A. Irvine." 122

The boy's body was taken from his father's mansion in the funeral procession glimpsed by the traveler at the Cornplanter Hotel, and was buried beside his mother near her church. The father had wanted to erect a monument over Sarah, but had deferred to Emily Duncan's desire for an unostentatious marble slab. For his son, however, he would have a monument, a column of stone, funereally black. In the family Bible he recorded the death as "1850"; he could not bear to

¹²¹ Callender Irvine, Jr., to Mrs. Blaine, Apr. 22, 1848, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹²² Undated note in G. A. Irvine Papers. August Gross, caretaker at Irvine from 1904 to 1959, pointed out the stone to the writer in 1958.

name the fatal day. To cherish poor Callender's appearance, he had several oil portraits and a miniature painted after photographic likenesses.¹²³

On Christmas, 1850, when the day was done, Dr. Irvine addressed a letter to his daughters. "As I have no one to talk of or to this evening, I may as well send you a Christmas gift in the form of a letter." After describing how he had spent the day in visiting a distant sawmill, the Doctor went on to mention what he had for supper. "Coffee!! Buckwheat cakes and as good sausages as I ever eat, thanks to Minnie's postscript receipt. . . . I should have enjoved it more if your aunt & selves had been opposite me. No repining, for thousands at that moment may have wanted a mouthful and would have been thankful to get it even alone; and this reminds me of a conversation our dear boy had with me one stormy night whilst in bed together. He seemed to realize fully how much better we were off than many in this world and grateful to God for it. How many pleasant & sad memories force themselves at this moment into my mind connected with him. . . . Much love dear children from me & now I will turn round while the wind howls & the snow falls and read an hour & then to bed, and so passes my Christmas. May we be spared to pass some future ones together in sober contentment."124

To assuage his grief, Dr. Irvine sought consolation through spiritualism. He bought books like *The Phantom World* and *The Celestial Telegraph*, ¹²⁵ and attended seances in Warren, where, through the aid of a medium, he attempted to commune with the spirits of the dead. The result was not inspiring, unless one enjoyed conversations with evil spirits, such as that of Freeman Dunn, a Pittsburgh murderer. But at least these occasions were lively. At one of them, Dr. Irvine sat on a table which moved briskly and mysteriously about the room. "If you can move the table with me on it," said the Doctor,

^{123 &}quot;A plain marble slab with a short inscription it appears to me would suit the situation better than a monument. . . . You know I am not fond of display & yet I should like to see something over the remains of dear Sarah." Emily Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Aug. 7, 1840, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ These titles were found in Dr. Irvine's library: Rev. Henry Christmas, The Phantom World: The History and Philosophy of Spirits, Apparitions (Philadelphia, 1851); L. Alph Cahagnet, The Celestial Telegraph: or, Secrets of the Life to Come, Revealed through Magnetism (New York, 1851).

"you can throw me off the table." Scarcely had he gotten these words out, than he was tossed violently to the floor. 126

Dr. Irvine had plenty to occupy his mind aside from spirits. He was deeply engaged in multifarious business activities and his fortunes were reaching a climactic point. To understand the situation in which he had placed himself, it is necessary to go back to the time of his wife's death and pick up the threads of his accomplishments at Irvine.

Dr. Irvine's Business Endeavors

It was said of Dr. Irvine that he was a student of nature and of books. 127 Certainly, he was a born agriculturist who had inherited his father's love of animals and an outdoor, rural life. The improvement of Brokenstraw Farm was his passion. Its one hundred and sixty acres were liberally dotted with barns and houses, but there was much more to be done to beautify it and to bring its farming potential to its peak.

In 1841, Robert Shortt built three stone dwellings on the place. A stone mason, Shortt had emigrated to Warren from Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1833, and two years later settled in nearby Youngsville. 128 It was he who built the Irvine church and Dr. Irvine's icehouse near the mansion. The three solid stone houses he erected in 1841 included a farmer's house at the lower end of the property, "in the hollow," another occupied by farmer Christian Gross on the high ground across the flats from the gristmill, and the miller's house adjacent to the mill. 129

In addition to the home farm, Dr. Irvine owned other farming property. Brokenstraw Island's sixty-three acres were kept under

¹²⁶ Clipping from an issue of the New York Tribune, June, 1851, ibid.

¹²⁷ Obituary notice of W. A. Irvine, Warren Ledger, Sept. 10, 1886.

¹²⁸ Schenck, 690. That Shortt built these houses is an assumption. He was still in the neighborhood and they look like his work.

¹²⁹ That these houses were built in 1841 is indicated by several bills for lathing and plastering them in November, 1841. See particularly John Taggart's bill of Nov. 12, 1841, for "13 days work at lathing and plastering done at William A. Irvine's . . . on the three stone houses occupied by C. Gross, Jas. David & one opposite Doctr. W. A. Irvine house in the hollow," Newbold-Irvine Papers. Another stone house on the far side of the Brokenstraw was also built in 1841.

cultivation. Across the Allegheny and on the far side of Brokenstraw Creek were to be seen many of his fields. These he leased to tenant farmers who paid him one half of their produce in rent.¹³⁰

Farming, however, could not bring in sufficient income to pay for the costly improvements which constantly engaged Dr. Irvine's attention. As has been noted, he went into other money-making activities, such as operating a gristmill, a sawmill, and a blacksmith shop on his place. He also owned a tavern stand near Brokenstraw bridge. Then, too, there was his general store, which he operated in partnership with his cousin Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine. His workmen were paid partially in goods from the store. There it was that the master of Irvine had his office. There his clerk, David D. Lord, maintained the ledgers and journals, and there the business papers were carefully docketed, tied in bundles, and stored in pigeon holes.

The store had branches elsewhere, such as one at Deerfield. "How would you like an interest in and manage my Tidioute saw mill," wrote Dr. Irvine to a lumberman. "I am too far off. I would take an interest in a small store so that you could buy & trade for logs to stock it. It wants the personal attention of one man." As this letter indicates, he connected his storekeeping closely with his lumbering business, and he owned more sawmills than the one on his place. Several of these mills were to be found up the Brokenstraw Creek and its tributaries, the one at Spring Creek run by George T. Eldred being perhaps the most important. Lumber was the country's money crop and Dr. Irvine, next to Guy C. Irvine, who was no relation, was the neighborhood's chief operator. During the middle years of the nineteenth century, Brokenstraw Creek disgorged annually an estimated five million feet of boards and ten to fifteen million shingles. 1922

¹³⁰ See, for example, his contract of May 19, 1840, with Nathaniel Payne for a farm near the mouth of the Brokenstraw, *ibid*.

¹³¹ In the Newbold-Irvine Papers a great mass of material reflects the running of the store at Irvine. One ledger of the Deerfield store has also survived. W. A. Irvine to unnamed person, Irvine, Jan. 18, 1853, *ibid.*

¹³² Babbitt, 9. Guy C. Irvine, who did much business with W. A. Irvine, arrived in Warren about 1815 and operated first on the Brokenstraw. He died Aug. 24, 1868. Irvine family notes, Warren County Historical Society. In 1853, Dr. Irvine owned the following sawmills: White Oak Mills on the Allegheny River; Wild Cat Mill in Limestone Township; the home mill at the mouth of the Brokenstraw; the Garner Mill on the Brokenstraw; a steam mill in Eldred Township; and the mill at Spring Creek. Agreement between W. A. Irvine and Thomas Struthers, Oct. 27, 1853, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

BINGHAMS' TRANSPORTATION LINE.

BINGHAM & BROTHERS, Agts., Philadelphia.

WILLIAM BINGHAM, Agt., Pittsburg.

Depot, 276 Market Street,

PHILLA DIELIPHILAS

And Canal Basin, Liberty St., Pittsburg.



Lower

in good order the under-named articles, marked as per margin, which we promise to deliver in like good order, to

on presenting this receipt and payment of freight, at our Warehouse in Pittsburg, within / days (Sundays and unavoidable delays on Railroad or Canal excepted, of which the certificate of Supervisor Collector, Lock-keeper, or Affidavit of Captain shall be evidence,) paying freight for the same, at the following rate per 100 lbs:

RAILROAD LINE, TIME (MILL DAYS.

Pianos and Fire Engines \$1

RECEIVED of

Grocerics, Tin in Boxes, Sheet iron, Cop. Port, Anvils, Spirits Turpentine, Sal Æratus, Alum, Madder, Raisins, Salts, Dry Goods, Confectionary, Fruits, Startionary Shoes, Leather, Saddlery, Nuts, Tobacco in Bales, Hats, Caps, Bonnets

New Furniture, Looking-Glasses, Gun. powder, Carriages, Willow Baskets,

Looking-glass Plates and Frames, Clocks, Aqua-fortis, Oil of Vitriol, Trees and

fardware, Paints, Dyc-Stuffs, Drugs, Medicines, Mahogany, Wool, Steel, Sinders' Boards, Plants, and Acids in carboys

Oil, Glue, Brimstone, and Salt Petre,

Second-hand Furniture and Baggago ... 3 00 Coffee, Codfish and Hemp ... 1 10

Queensware in hlids, and crates 1 fron Chests and Manufactured Marble ... 1 Iferring, per barrel (nett) 1 Bur Blocks and Block Marble Mackerel, per barrel Serman Clay and Whiting (nett) ar, Rosin, Pitch and Turpentine Marble Slabs **\$1.25**

within 6 days after the arrival of goods at Pittsburg, and before the delivery of them. -- This receipt delivered without alteration or erasuro. A Deduction of 25 cents per 100 pounds, (except on fish) will be allowed upon condition that the freight be paid in bankable funds cents per 100 lb. dockage allowed for overtime.

HEADING OF MERCHANDISE INVOICE OF GOODS FOR DR. IRVINE'S STORE

This forest produce was loaded on rafts and shipped down the Allegheny, passing in picturesque and seemingly unending procession close by Dr. Irvine's house, for the channel was deeper there than on the other side of the island which split the river at that point. A typical contract by which he obtained lumber reads in part: "W. A. Irvine agrees to employ the said S. C. Roup to stock and saw at his mills at White Oak in Warren Co. on the following conditions. Said Roup is to cut and deliver from lands purchased from B. H. McGee, in Limestone Township, at his sole cost & charge logs sufficient to make one million feet of boards in each year, till the whole pine & hemlock shall be exhausted thereon. Is to manufacture and deliver said one million feet of lumber annually at Louisville or Cincinnati to said Irvine or his agent. . . ."133

Although Dr. Irvine rented his sawmill at the mouth of the Brokenstraw, the lease guaranteed him the full production of the mill. For one thing, the sawyer's rent was one quarter of the boards sawed, and, for another, he was under contract to sell Dr. Irvine the remaining three quarters should Irvine want them.¹³⁴

As a property owner, he realized that the value of his lands depended on internal improvements that would open up the country. His vigorous activity in promoting enterprises of this sort brought him to the attention of Philadelphia capitalists. In 1838, Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States of Pennsylvania, appointed Dr. Irvine to vote the Bank's stock in the Warren and Ridgeway Turnpike Road Company. The next year found Irvine president of both the Warren Bridge Company and the Warren and Franklin Turnpike Company. This latter endeavor, in which his activity and efficiency were much appreciated by the citizens of Warren, built the first wagon road from their city to Franklin, thereby helping to establish a stage road to Pittsburgh. 136

A railroad connection to Philadelphia had for some years excited Dr. Irvine's imagination. Philadelphia capital was behind the idea and Nicholas Biddle was president of the proposed road, the Sunbury and Erie Railroad. In 1838, while laying out the route across the

¹³³ Contract, dated Aug. 3, 1853, ibid.

¹³⁴ Contract, dated Nov. 2, 1848, between W. A. Irvine and W. G. Garceland, ibid.

¹³⁵ Appointment of proxy, signed by Biddle Aug 30, 1838, ibid.

¹³⁶ Warren Ledger, Sept. 10, 1886.

Brokenstraw near his store, the surveyors stayed at Irvine's house. So enthusiastic was Dr. Irvine about the glorious future which the railroad would bring to his land holdings that in 1841 he erected the Cornplanter Hotel as well as other large stone buildings near the east bank of the Brokenstraw to serve the area's anticipated development. Their completion coincided with the cataclysmic banking panic which wiped out the Bank of the United States as well as the southern banks in which Dr. Irvine held so much stock, and delayed the building of the road. Consequently, rather than catering to the needs of those who traveled by rail, the Cornplanter became a rendezvous for raftsmen.¹³⁷

When, at long last, work on the railroad was recommenced in the fifties, Dr. Irvine was elected a director and helped sell its stock. According to a Warren spokesman, "His personal effort and influence were largely instrumental in obtaining subscriptions from Philadelphia which were essential." ¹³⁸

Dr. Irvine's absorption in schemes for the public good brought him into local prominence, but the only office of consequence he ever held was that of postmaster at Irvine, where he managed the mail from the establishment of the post office in December 1826 until 1865. His personal mail was heavy, so that probably the chief advantage of the office was his privilege of sending and receiving it free of charge. In 1840, he ran for Congress on the Whig ticket and was defeated. His partner, Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine, a Democrat, strenuously opposed him in the campaign, and, when it was over, William A. Irvine bought out Galbraith's interest in the store. It is doubtful that the two men were ever friendly again, although in time the breech was ostensibly closed.

Late in 1840, Dr. Irvine visited his children in Philadelphia. On his return home, he found that his two servants had both married

137 Mrs. W. A. Irvine to Emily Duncan, Sept. 4, 1838, Newbold-Irvine Papers. Perkins, 22. 138 Warren Ledger, Sept. 10, 1886. The railroad was not completed to Warren until 1859. Its name was later changed to the Philadelphia and Erie and it is now a leased line of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

139 Table of Post Offices in the United States (Washington, 1831), 105, lists William A. Irvine as postmaster at Irvine. The copy from the Irvine family library is inscribed "W. A. Irvine P.M., Irvine, Pa."

140 The contract for buying out G. A. Irvine is dated Oct. 20, 1840. Newbold-Irvine Papers. Letters from both William and Galbraith to their fathers about this trouble are contained in the Newbold-Irvine Papers and the G. A. Irvine Papers.

and gone off.¹⁴¹ For a while, the Doctor boarded at his new Cornplanter Hotel, which had opened on June 24, 1841, across from his store on the Warren side of the Brokenstraw,¹⁴² but when Robinson R. Moore, of the Moore & Irvine 1816 partnership, arrived to assist him in the store, the Doctor moved back to his house. Mrs. Moore and her daughter took over its management.

That summer of 1841, General Callender Irvine paid his final visit to Brokenstraw Farm. Returning to Philadelphia, he died on October 9 and was buried at Ronaldson's Cemetery with full military honors. The militia paraded in force, and "The hearse was attended by Generals Patterson and Prevost, Commodore Biddle, and officers of the Army and Navy. In the rear, followed the Society of the Cincinnati, of which the deceased was President, and the Hibernian Society, of which he was Vice President." 143

Although so busy with the affairs of the world and his struggle to gain a fortune, Dr. Irvine never lost sight of his wife's dreams for Irvine. His name led the list of subscribers in 1840 who pledged either money, labor, or materials to build a stone schoolhouse "opposite to the church near the mouth of Brokenstraw," and he gave the land for the purpose. Through his efforts, a minister, the Rev. N. M. Crane, was obtained. Year after year, Dr. Irvine contributed about half of Mr. Crane's salary. Later, he was to supervise the building of a parsonage near the church. 145

By such actions, he encouraged education and helped keep the church open. He knew how much it had meant to Sarah. In his possession he retained a prayer she wrote not long before her death. "May the Lord in infinite mercy abundantly bless this little church & let it ever stand as a shining light & pure emblem of the invisible

¹⁴¹ Emily Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Apr. 16, 1841, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹⁴² Advertisement in the Warren *People's Monitor* as cited in the *Warren County, Pennsylvania*, *Almanac 1941*, 16. A valuable description of Irvine at this time is recorded by Sherman Day in his *Historical Collections of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1843), 653-654.

¹⁴³ United States Gazette, Oct. 14, 1841. The author knows of no biographical sketch of Gen. Callender Irvine. Jeannette Mirsky in her *The World of Eli Whitney* (New York, 1952), written in collaboration with Allan Nevins, portrays Irvine as a scoundrel without the slightest basis in her evidence that this writer could perceive.

¹⁴⁴ Newbold-Irvine Papers. The schoolhouse no longer stands.

¹⁴⁵ Several annual subscription lists for the minister's stipend, as well as the bills for the parsonage built in 1868, are in *ibid*. Although Dr. Irvine supervised the work, the parsonage was mostly built with a thousand dollar bequest of Emily Duncan.



Dr. Stephen Duncan



201 MA France Brains

Dr. William A. Irvine in 1876

Church on High. May it be abundantly useful in reviving His work in the hearts of his own people & in bringing many precious souls to a right knowledge of the only true God & the Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁴⁶

Benefactions to good causes were not responsible for straitening the Doctor financially. It was something else that swallowed all his earnings from lumber, farm produce, store, and mill. Improvements unending continued at Brokenstraw Farm, and chief among them was the enlargement of his house.

Dr. Irvine as Industrialist and Speculator

The house which Callender Irvine had built as a summer home in 1822 was neither large enough nor elegant enough for his son. He and Sarah had discussed plans for increasing its size in 1838. They had pored over the designs in J. C. Loudon's 1836 London edition of An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture until the spine cracked and they had to rebind the book in a homemade manner. Moreover, they doubtless consulted with the architect W. Kelly, whom the Doctor hired that summer to lay out the town of Irvine. The time, however, was not quite ripe for an ambitious improvement to the house, and they had determined on adding only a room above the front porch. This room, which became the blue room, and its bedroom behind it, partially taken from the upstairs hallway, was an expedient for the moment. "The Doctor thinks he will put up those two rooms over the stoop," Sarah wrote Emily Duncan on January 11, 1839; "we ought not to think of building for a year at least, & these rooms will add much to our convenience." 148

Sarah's death and the absence of his children did not deter Dr. Irvine from his plans. Unfortunately, only one scrap of paper among his archives relates directly to the enlargement of the house, and this was the mason's bill for foundation work. Barely a month after

¹⁴⁶ Undated fragment, ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Kelly's bill, "For professional services for the Town of Irvine-\$40.00," is in ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Sarah's death, Emily Duncan wrote him: "I know you are so engaged with your harvesting & building." What the building was is not stated, but it may have been a shallow addition put on the south side of the house to give it more width. 150

The main improvements were made in the 1840's. They consisted, in brief, of extending the house ten feet or so farther south toward the servants' quarters. This helped provide for a good-sized dining room, a pantry, and several closets, the basic part of the house, the entry, and the two downstairs rooms, now the library and parlor, remaining unchanged. The west end of the entry was lengthened for closet space and a small room, which, by opening doors on either side of it, gave out onto the new porch circling the northern end of the house. At the mid-point of the porch, the covered area was extended in a large half moon, above which was a dome surmounted by a curious large wooden decoration. This decoration would have interfered with the view from the two central second-story windows of the house, but they were always kept shuttered and were, in fact, merely architectural adornments, being false windows. At either end of the upstairs hall were small rooms, one of which, the blue room, was above the old stoop and commanded a view of the Allegheny, while the other, known as "the lookout," faced the hills from which the carriage drive wound down and crossed farm fields on its way to the mansion. A new bedroom was situated above the dining room and an octagonal cupola crowned the attic roof. All along the roof and gable ridges were fancy railings.

The piazza, which had formerly connected the main house to the kitchen, was removed and the two were joined together, though on the ground level a carriage drive swept right through. In bad weather, double doors on either side of the building were opened so that passengers could be driven to the side door under shelter, or could enter the opposite door to the kitchen. Above this drive-in, or portecochere, were more bedrooms and closets leading down the back hall to a door which let into the much enlarged kitchen wing.

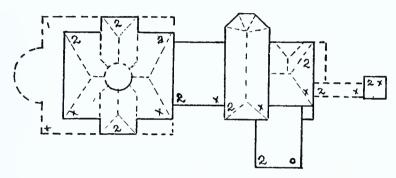
The features of the kitchen enlargement, bracketing the old kitchen proper and servants' dining room, were a flower room, hall,

¹⁴⁹ Emily Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Aug. 8, 1839, ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Evidence of this addition is plainly seen in the attic, where a subsequent enlargement of the house swallowed up an outer wall not original with the house.

and storage room on the drive side and a very large laundry at the far end. Above these areas were three or four bedrooms on the second floor, and an attic divided into a number of rooms. At the west end of the kitchen a new wing was built. In its lower level were coal and wood bins, and on its second floor was a large chamber—the Negro quarter. This was intended to sleep four servants. Against its north wall were four closets, each with a built-in bureau.

The architectural style of the house was Gothic, with much ornamentation of an individual style. The whole was exceedingly well constructed of heavy timber and the trim, both inside and out, was impressively done. There was no central heating, but each room had



Dr. IRVINE'S MANSION

its own stove. There was no plumbing, but then there never had been any. It is interesting to observe that in the heyday of Victorian ornamentation of houses with jigsaw work, Dr. Irvine's residence was not considered fashionable. In 1886, a writer described it as very attractive "while severely plain." It was by then indeed the work of a previous generation, its completion presumably having occupied much of Dr. Irvine's attention in the 1840's. It has been said that it took ten years to build, but that is doubtless an exaggeration. 152

It is understandable, however, that the costs of this house, when added to his other improvements and expenses, such as the maintenance of his widowed mother¹⁵³ and Aunt Elizabeth Reynolds,

¹⁵¹ Warren Ledger, Sept. 10, 1886.

¹⁵² Statement made by August Gross and repeated to the writer by Richard Skinner, caretaker, in July, 1963.

¹⁵³ Mrs. Callender Irvine died at the age of 77 on Apr. 11, 1852.

brought pressure on Dr. Irvine to increase his income. For years, he had been selling wool to agents for cloth manufacturers. Why not establish his own factory and make the cloth himself? Wool was plentiful locally and the cost of labor cheap. Moreover, he hoped to obtain contracts for cloth from the army and from southern planters.

In May, 1845, he wrote to James Warren, chief clerk in charge of purchasing uniform materials and equipment for the Commissary General, and to his father-in-law Dr. Stephen Duncan of Natchez, requesting samples of the stuff they used. Warren, who had served under Doctor Irvine's father and who acted as the Doctor's financial



LABEL FROM DR. IRVINE'S FACTORY

agent in Philadelphia, sent samples, at the same time trying to discourage the project. Dr. Duncan also complied and was a bit more optimistic.¹⁵⁴

Meanwhile, the building of the mill had already started near the mill race about a hundred and fifty yards below Brokenstraw bridge. The factory proper was a two-story frame and shingle structure 40 x 60 feet in size, and its bleachery was also two stories, 33 x 60½ feet. The record shows that Dr. Irvine made excellent flannels and other cloths, the only criticism of them being their price. He turned out many different kinds of material, but his greatest output was in

¹⁵⁴ James Warren to W. A. Irvine, June 11, 1845, Newbold-Irvine Papers. Stephen Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Natchez, June 23, 1845, *ibid*.

¹⁵⁵ Specifications and plans of the factory, ibid.

white or grey linseys and jeans, coarse fabrics known as "Negro cloth." These he shipped by steamer or keel boat two thousand miles downstream to Natchez, where they were sold by Dr. Duncan and later by E. B. Baker, a commission merchant.

With eight looms tended by as many as sixteen hands under the direction of a Yankee foreman, Philip Burke, Irvine manufactured broadcloth, cassimeres, beaver cloth, and tweeds. Some of this material he placed in country stores, such as Augustus Guy's of Guy's Mill, who exchanged wool and maple sugar for it. But most of his northern business was done through commission merchants in Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and New York City.

At the same time that he built his wool factory, Dr. Irvine also built a foundry, machine shop, and warehouse. There, eight or nine hands were normally employed under the supervision of E. P. Richardson, and later of another agent. The aim of the foundry was to supply every sort of casting needed for the farm and for the lumber trade. It was well stocked with patterns for a multitude of objects, such as gears, bolts, pinions, and fly wheels. Dr. Irvine obtained rights to manufacture patented devices, like Ashley Craft's improved cooking stove, Joseph Trump's Hill-Side Ploughs, and Zebulon Parker's Patent Percussion and Reaction Water Wheels used to propel sawmills.¹⁵⁶ He also made circular saws for the mills. All in all, the foundry did a good business, but it was difficult to get in payments. Stoves sold at country stores were bartered in wheat, and Dr. Irvine then had to wait until the storekeeper sold the wheat. Similarly, stoves sold in New York dairy country were paid for in butter, which had then to be shipped by canal to New York City to obtain a cash credit. When the canal went dry there was a long delay.157

The diversified industrial and commercial empire which Dr. Irvine had established at the crossing of the Brokenstraw demanded a most complicated system of credit. The Doctor paid bills by issuing notes payable by various banks or private houses, such as that of the Alexanders of Louisville, Kentucky. The Alexanders and others who served as collection agents for Irvine sent on these drafts for payment

¹⁵⁶ Contracts dated Mar. 3, 1848, June, 1848, Sept. 28, 1847, ibid.

¹⁵⁷ For examples, see Nehemiah L. Finn to D. W. Fitch (Irvine's clerk), Mina, June 4, 1846, and Gillis & Clover to W. A. Irvine, Ridgeway, June 25, 1847, *ibid*.

and also remitted sums collected to Irvine's agent in Philadelphia, James Warren. During a six-month period in 1851, Warren paid \$190,000 to redeem the Doctor's notes, and collected \$193,000 for him. This did not represent all the cash flow from the Irvine enterprises, but it is an indication of the scope of their activity and also of the fact that they were not very profitable.

Ever a promoter of useful improvements, Dr. Irvine was deeply interested in a proposed telegraph line, the Allegheny and Erie Telegraph Company. A prospectus in the form of its Articles of Association was issued in 1848. The scheme was to utilize Professor Samuel F. B. Morse's "Electro-Magnetic Telegraph" in a line from Pittsburgh to connect with the New York Erie, or Erie and Michigan lines of telegraph. Later, Dr. Irvine procured subscribers for its stock, and when the telegraph became a reality in November, 1850, its Irvine Telegraph Office was run by Dr. Irvine, presumably at his store. 159

So numerous and widespread were Dr. Irvine's interests that he subscribed to seven newspapers and many journals, such as the *Wool Grower*, the *Pennsylvania Farm Journal*, the *Genessee Farmer*, and *Bicknill's Detector*. Despite all this energy, as previously indicated, his affairs did not prosper.

Dr. Irvine had been in debt for years. He had borrowed money from his wife's grandmother, Mrs. Blaine. A debt incurred in 1842 with his first cousin William C. Irvine was still unpaid in 1854. But mostly he borrowed from his father-in-law. In 1848, Dr. Duncan let him have \$18,000 secured by a mortgage on the property at Erie, at the same time cautioning him on making punctual payments, which he had not done in the past. This loan, as in previous cases, simply led to another larger one.

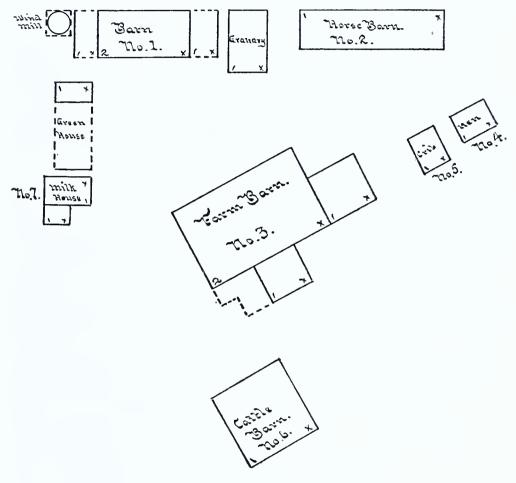
With obvious reluctance, Dr. Duncan made available a new loan of \$25,000 in 1851, begging him not to use one cent of it on improvements to his property. The millionaire planter expressed himself forcibly on this point: "If I thought that one dollar more would be

¹⁵⁸ James Warren to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Nov. 4, 1851, ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Accounts of the Irvine Telegraph Office are in his post office newspaper journal, ibid. See Articles of Association for the Formation of the Allegheny and Erie Telegraph Company (Ithaea, 1848), and a revised edition of 1849 in ibid.

¹⁰⁰ S. Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Natchez, Nov. 16, 1848, ibid.

thus expended or appropriated, I would see your whole estate sacrificed for a song before I would come to your relief. You have a species of monomania which has so mastered your judgment that you are wholly blinded to your true interests. I consider your rage for im-



THE IRVINE BARNYARD

provement nothing short of mental derangement. But this is a subject I do not wish to discuss." ¹⁶¹

This warning was received at a time when Dr. Irvine was contemplating new ways of investing his money. Stimulated by the advice of his lawyer, Thomas Struthers of Warren, he was considering vast purchases of timber and coal lands. Locally, Struthers was

¹⁶¹ S. Duncan to W. A. Irvine, Natchez, May 10, 1851, ibid.

the leader in this form of speculation. He had come to Warren in 1828, risen quickly in his profession, and attained a high reputation as a land merchant. His practice was to purchase large tracts on time, and to pay for them by the proceeds of resales at advanced prices. To make these wilderness lands accessible, Struthers promoted railroad building and served on the first board of directors of the Sunbury and Erie. 162

In June, 1851, Struthers offered Irvine a partnership in lands available on Willow Creek in McKean County. There the timber was so exceedingly fine that Struthers wrote: "I have no hesitation in believing it the grandest lumber enterprise which can possibly be got up on the waters of the Allegheny."163 Early in 1852, Irvine and Struthers secured title to this property. It consisted of nearly 27,000 acres and cost about \$25,000, only part of which was paid down. The transaction was made in Irvine's name with the understanding that Struthers would devote his time and attention to the business. To give the operation the appearance of a going concern, the sawmill at Willow Creek was repaired and lumbering commenced. Meanwhile, Struthers traveled about seeking buyers for the tract. In February, 1853, scarcely a year from the time of their purchase, they sold the property to Merritt Clark of New York for \$67,000. On paper this looked splendid, but they had to accept most of the payment in Rutland and Washington Railroad stock. Some of the cash that was received, Struthers borrowed from Irvine so that he was unable to pay off one of the original owners who ultimately sued him. As for the railroad stock, Struthers was to write Irvine two years later: "The whole thing is used up! Stock not worth the paper the certificates are written on. The bonds worth something, but no one willing to say how much." Dr. Irvine owned some of these bonds and subsequently received an offer for them from Jay Gould at ten cents on the dollar.161

This miserable result was little expected by Dr. Irvine who was much encouraged with the result of the Willow Creek deal. Its sale to Clark was consummated on February 1, 1853, and the very next

¹⁶² Augustus C. Rogers, Sketches of Representative Men, North and South (New York, 1872), 529. See also Schenck, 599-605.

¹⁶³ Thomas Struthers to W. A. Irvine, Warren, June 2, 1851, Newbold-Irvine Papers.
164 Thomas Struthers to W. A. Irvine, Boston, Aug. 2, 1855, and Jay Gould to W. A. Irvine, New York, Sept. 28, 1861, ibid.

day he purchased the 132,000 acre Jones tract for \$151,886. 165 This land in McKean and Elk Counties had been acquired by the Holland Land Company prior to 1800. In 1831, it became the property of Benjamin Jones, a Philadelphia Quaker. On his death in January, 1853, Jones's executors continued Jones's efforts to sell the tract and soon closed for about a dollar and a quarter an acre with Dr. Irvine, who had been negotiating with the Joneses for nearly a year. The deed of sale called for one fifth of the purchase money in thirty days and the remainder in installments.

From the very first, Dr. Irvine had difficulty meeting these financial terms. Believing Struthers to be an efficient agent in land matters, he took him in, together with two Philadelphians, and the four partners held as tenants in common. The attractiveness of the wild area they had gained lay not alone in its huge size but in its timber and coal potential. Moreover, the Sunbury and Erie Railroad was at last inching its way toward that part of the world and could, perhaps, be persuaded to enter the tract, thereby enhancing its value. Struthers and Irvine tried to work out plan after plan with the railroad managers, but all failed.

Meanwhile, with taxes and notes due to the Jones estate, their plight was becoming serious. A sale of half the property on favorable terms was worked out in May, 1854, with J. T. Foster of Albany, but Foster failed. Dr. Irvine's own situation became so desperate that on December 22, 1854, he deeded his share in trust to Struthers so that none of his creditors could embarrass its sale. Subsequently, in the spring of 1855, Struthers, without consulting Dr. Irvine, sold both their shares to a Philadelphia syndicate, which also acquired the other half of the Jones land from Dr. Irvine's former partners. Thus was formed the McKean & Elk Land & Improvement Company. Dr. Irvine maintained that Struthers would not account with him for Irvine's one-quarter interest held in trust, as well as in other important matters involving large sums of money claimed by Dr. Irvine from the sale to the Philadelphia company. This controversy dragged on in the courts for years.

¹⁶⁵ The records of the Willow Creek and Jones tract transactions are relatively complete in *ibid*.

¹⁶⁶ Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the McKean and Elk Land and Improvement Company to the Stockholders (Philadelphia, 1864). Copy bearing corrections in W. A. Irvine's hand, ibid.

At all events, his financial dealings with Struthers brought Irvine's affairs to the verge of a crisis. His other businesses were not doing well either. The factory, having lost the Natchez trade in 1853, was floundering. A summation of its balance sheet from its beginning in 1845 to May, 1853, showed a profit for that period of but \$4,738, although accounts due and perhaps uncollectable amounted to \$16,444. With the last shipment to a commission merchant taking place in August, 1854, the factory was about done as far as Dr. Irvine was concerned. The foundry was in no better shape. In August, 1854, Irvine retired from its management and rented it to another operator. 168

Despite debts long overdue and new debts fast accumulating, he was ready for another gamble. On June 1 of that year, he purchased 15,000 shares at a dollar a share of the Buckingham Gold Company of Buckingham County, Virginia. Since he had no funds to finance this speculation, he gave his notes payable in six months. Eventually, he was to redeem these notes with stock in a coal company, a poor exchange as the Gold Company stock proved worthless.¹⁶⁹

The fact that his financial situation was becoming ruinous was no secret. His cousin William C. Irvine, seeking payment of an old debt, wrote in September, 1854: "With no ordinary feelings of reluctance, I find myself compelled to lay before you the annexed account; and I assure you that I do so only after having exhausted my other resources." Unpaid debts two months later resulted in the sheriff seizing his lands at Erie. On December 1, 1854, his notes for the gold purchase fell due in New York. Since no money was available for their payment, they were all simultaneously protested on December 4. This was the climactic stroke that announced Dr. Irvine's failure. While he struggled frantically with his chaotic accounts, creditors from near and far hastened to levy their claims against his estate.

^{167 &}quot;Summary Statement for the Factory, from its Commencement to this 5th day of May, 1853," ibid.

¹⁶⁸ See advertisement of J. W. Taft & Son, Aug. 10, 1854, *ibid*. The foundry and factory were still in operation in 1867, and evidently continued on into the 70's. Perkins, 28.

¹⁶⁹ Joseph A. Clay to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Dec. 29, 1868, ibid.

¹⁷⁰ W. C. Irvine to W. A. Irvine, New York, Sept. 12, 1854, ibid.

¹⁷¹ The protests are preserved in ibid.



Watched by her cousins Margaret and Esther Newbold, Miss Lydia Biddle drives home, after having had afternoon tea under the large parasol to the right. ENTRANCE TO THE MANSION ENCLOSURE, 1890



FAILURE 67

Failure

Dr. Irvine's debts were so numerous and his creditors so eager to collect them that his entire estate was seized to satisfy the judgments and was sold in 1855 to the largest creditor, Dr. Stephen Duncan, for \$266,630.172 Dr. Duncan wanted to liquidate this purchase immediately by ridding himself of the real estate, but agreed to talk this matter over with Dr. Irvine at Louisville in November. There his plan was changed. Dr. Irvine persuaded him to consider the \$266,630 as an advance on his granddaughters' inheritances, urging that it was for their benefit that the property should be preserved.

An arrangement was worked out whereby Dr. Irvine would serve as Dr. Duncan's agent and carry on the store and lumber business in Dr. Duncan's name. The profits from the estate would go to meet the eight per cent chargeable on its purchase price. Moreover, Dr. Irvine was given a power of attorney to sell real estate, so that gradually the advance could be eliminated. When it was liquidated, the remaining real estate was to revert to Dr. Irvine's ownership.

This plan did not work at all. The estate yielded no income to meet the interest on the advance. Worse yet, it did not pay enough to meet taxes. Most aggravating of all, Dr. Irvine refused to sell real estate for any purpose other than taxes. Consequently, through its carrying charges, the advance swelled in size, thereby actually diminishing Margaret's and Sarah's inheritance. There were other annoyances for Dr. Duncan because of his agreement with his son-in-law. Some of the latter's creditors brought suits against Duncan as a responsible party. "I wish I had been 10,000 miles from Louisville," Dr. Duncan plaintively wrote, "when I encountered him there in 1855. I now begin to think his pride alone stands in the way of a desire to sell. He hates to be thought a poor man. . . . my patience is exhausted." 173

In September, 1860, Dr. Duncan peremptorily ordered Dr. Irvine to sell the land, but it was too late. The breath of Civil War was

¹⁷² This figure is probably too high for the sale price. However, ultimately Stephen Duncan's advance came to more than \$280,000. List of debts and costs as of July 6, 1855, *ibid*.

¹⁷³ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, date marred, possibly Jan. 30, 1860, ibid.

sweeping the nation and Dr. Duncan felt impelled to leave his marble mansion on Washington Square in New York,¹⁷⁴ where he had been living, and return to Natchez. He had lost all hope of realizing anything from the Irvine estate for his granddaughters, and the best he could now do was to convey the property to them to dispose of as they saw fit.

Early in 1861, he made the necessary conveyance and sent the deed north. Apprehensive about his granddaughters' future, he wrote: "Not an acre will be sold so long as their father lives. It really seems that he is either deranged on the subject of that property or has little regard for the interests of others. He knows well that the product of the property for the last six years has not paid taxes & expences, nay that a lot had to be sold in Erie to meet these items, and yet he seems to think it a good investment for his children. The great grandchildren of his children might possibly be benefited by holding such property. But for his children an investment producing only 2 per cent per an. would be infinitely preferable." 1775

So that Margaret and Sarah would not want, he arranged through his New York banker that on January 1, 1862, and again on January 1, 1863, they would receive \$6,000 for their support. And also on January 1, 1863, they were to receive \$137,800 to be held in trust for them. From this trust, he hoped each would derive an income of about \$4,500 a year. Dr. Duncan calculated that these children of his daughter Sarah would then stand his estate \$541,000, including their mother's dowry. That was all he could do for them. He had his surviving children—Henry, Charlotte, Samuel, Maria, and Stephen¹⁷⁶—to consider, and to each of them he planned to convey, as of January 1, 1863, the sum of \$541,000, thereby doing equal justice to all. "In doing so," he wrote, "I hope to rid myself of much care & anxiety in the management of so large a property." 177

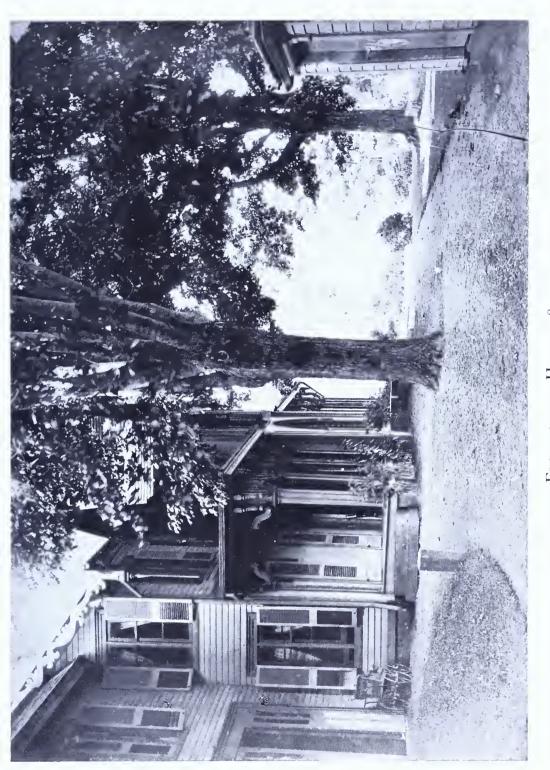
In 1862, Margaret and Sarah partitioned the Irvine lands. To Sarah, the younger of the two, fell the homestead with its farm. Margaret built a new house on the other side of the Brokenstraw.

¹⁷⁴ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, New York, Sept. 4, 1860, ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, Natchez, Mar. 4, 1861, ibid.

¹⁷⁶ H. S. Leverich to W. A. Irvine, New York, Feb. 12, 1870, ibid., names as Dr. Duncan's heirs "Henry P., Charlotte B., Saml. P., Maria L., & Stephen."

¹⁷⁷ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, Natchez, Jan. 20 and Feb. 26, 1861, ibid.



Note carriage entrance at the left and milk house on top of the ice house at the right. FRONT OF THE HOUSE, 1890



From the River Bank, 1890 Note stone ice house in foreground built by Robert Shortt in 1838.

This seemed the better arrangement as Margaret was married, and living with an unmarried daughter in the old house put less pressure on Dr. Irvine. Each daughter received lots in Erie and in Warren and more than a thousand acres in the Brokenstraw area, as well as other scattered properties.

Times had changed at Irvine. The factory and the foundry were in other hands, and the store had been sold. But Dr. Irvine's tenacity had saved the ancestral acres for his family. His mansion and farm looked as beautiful as ever. Roistering lumbermen still manned his rafts of lumber that swept by his porch, and he continued to live as he always had, surrounded by his family portraits, his library walls decorated with General William Irvine's trophies. It mattered not that his daughters held title; this was his home.

In fact, Dr. Irvine was not downhearted about his failure. Some assets he had retained, including valuable reserved rights in the Jones tract. Someday he would sell land. The family had great expectations. His business career was by no means over. Oil had been discovered only a few miles from Irvine. With his customary energy and optimism, Dr. Irvine leaped into the new arena. He became an oil man!

Later Career of Dr. Irvine

Word that Colonel E. L. Drake had discovered extensive deposits of petroleum near Titusville in August, 1859, started the stampede. Everyone wanted a stake in the get-rich-quick game. All sorts of organizations were formed. Rusty boilers and wornout engines were pressed into service to work the necessary rigs. Thousands of wells were sunk.

Something of the flavor of the times is caught in several letters from one T. Savage of Tionesta. Savage knew Dr. Irvine, having leased a steam sawmill in Eldred Township from him back in 1853.¹⁷⁸ Like so many entering the oil business, he had little capital and so he appealed to the Doctor, who, despite his financial disaster, could always raise some money. On October 18, 1859, Savage wrote: "We

¹⁷⁸ See contract between W. A. Irvine and E. A. Forrest and T. Savage, May 28, 1853, ibid.

have great excitement here about the oil springs. I have secured several springs and have the promise of Mr. Lock's right opposite where the Warren Co are boreing for oil. If they succeed in finding plenty of oil, will you take an interest in a well and furnish us some tools for boreing and a small engine for pumping? Mr. Drake was pumping 22 barrels per day when his works took fire by the gas from the well and burnt. He has another engine on the ground and will have it in operation in a few days." Stimulating Dr. Irvine with the news that Drake had been offered \$100,000 for his well, Savage urged a meeting at Titusville.¹⁷⁹

Dr. Irvine was among the first to respond to the oil craze, and Savage was one of the agents he employed to operate for him. On January 15, 1860, Savage again wrote from Tionesta: "I was at oil creek Saturday and saw the men that have an interest in the Papp claim, and they are all willing to accept the engine and give you 1/8 of the whole claim. We have commenced a well and think we can go to the rock without using pipe. We would like to have the engine repaired as soon as convenient. We saw the oil continually rising Saturday along the back of the Papp claim. Kellogg & Hibbard's well made an explosion of gas and oil Thursday night and they found their floor covered with oil one inch thick in the morning. . . . I will go down the river soon and secure that acre for you."

Early in 1860, the Tidioute oil field was opened, and for a time a perfect furor raged. Tidioute was just below Irvine on the Allegheny. Dr. Irvine was ecstatic, writing Dr. Duncan that the discovery of oil twelve miles from his lands would enhance their value. Duncan's response was that he wished Irvine would commence selling. 181

The record of Dr. Irvine's early oil ventures is fragmentary. A draft of a lease he made in 1860 with two Warren operators is one of the few surviving evidences. In this contract, he gave them the right "to bore or mine for Seneca oil" on his property on the banks of the Allegheny in Deerfield Township in return for one-half the oil they produced. Another of his initial oil efforts was the Irvine Run Company. Eventually, his entire interest was to center on a property in

¹⁷⁹ Savage's letters are in ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Schenck, 161.

¹⁸¹ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, New York, Jan. 23, 1860, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

Limestone Township, across the Allegheny from Tidioute. Next to this tract, the Economy Oil Company opened a field in the fall of 1861, and the area became a large producer with about seventy-five wells on the Economy ground alone. It was with oil from this section that Dr. Irvine hoped to recoup his losses and gain at last the fortune which had so long eluded him.

Meanwhile, the Civil War made fortunes for some and beggars of others. Deep in the south, Dr. Duncan cursed southern fireaters and northern abolitionists alike. He was basically a nationalist and had little sympathy with the war or with either side. If he had to choose, he chose the south, for his plantations and most of his wealth were there. Dr. Irvine's opinions were similar to Dr. Duncan's. He disapproved of the war. In September, 1861, he was nominated to the Pennsylvania Assembly on the Union ticket, but declined the nomination. In politics, he was of the antiwar Democratic wing. Various books in his library, such as Bishop Hopkins' Bible View of Slavery, which justified slavery, clearly indicate his political bias.

After three scorching summers at Natchez, Stephen Duncan came north by way of Canada in 1864. He could stand the heat no more. Aged and ailing, he went into seclusion in his New York mansion. There Dr. Irvine called on him in August. In a letter to his sister Emily, Dr. Duncan wrote: "I had the pleasure on Saturday of a visit from Dr. Irvine, and was glad to see him and truly glad to see him in such fine health & spirits. He looked & was more cheerful than I have seen him for many years. He looked as though a load had been removed from his shoulders. I judge his pecuniary condition is improved. Indeed, he told me of sales he had made of the property at prices far beyond those at which it was entered in his schedule. . . . I hope he may continue to realize far beyond the estimates he put on the property, and that thus, in his old age, he may feel himself at least independent if not rich. He has struggled for many years against a load of debt & trouble sufficient to break down the spirit of ordinary men."184 Dr. Duncan told his son-in-law that the Pennsylvania oil boom was bound to bust and advised him to sell while that market was at the top. Needless to say, his advice was excellent.

¹⁸² Schenck, 497.

¹⁸³ Irvine family notes, Warren County Historical Society.

¹⁸⁴ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, New York, Aug. 29, 1864, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

It always was. Also, needless to say, Dr. Irvine disregarded it. He always did.

In the summer of 1866, Emily Duncan visited Irvine to see her former charges, Margaret and Sarah—Minnie and Sally. There she was seized by a sudden illness and died. Her remains were placed in Dr. Irvine's plot above the Irvine church, next to those of little Callender and close by the grave of her beloved niece Sarah. Six months later, her brother Dr. Stephen Duncan died at his house in New York and was buried at Laurel Hill in Philadelphia, according to his desire to be interred near his 'sainted mother.' 186

Two months after Dr. Duncan's death, Dr. Irvine made a major move in the oil business. In 1849, he had purchased six hundred acres in Limestone Township, across from Tidioute, a notable lumbering center where many mills were located. There he acquired a farm, later called the Irvine Farm, and the White Oak Sawmill. W. A. Brigham worked this water-powered lath mill for him and also kept up the farm. Another Brigham, Levi, ran a nearby store belonging to the Doctor. 157

Although the farm became a valuable oil property, Dr. Irvine did not develop it immediately. As a part of his former estate it had been purchased by Dr. Duncan and was now owned by Margaret and Sarah. The Doctor's first efforts appear to have been aimed at independent operations, some of which were hampered by want of transportation to get the oil to market. In 1861, he brought this situation to the attention of William G. Moorhead, president of the Sunbury & Erie Railroad, but Moorhead, although aware of the value of the oil trade, pointed out that times were such that he could not build a road to tap it. The next year, Dr. Irvine urged the Pennsylvania Railroad to build a line down the Allegheny River to secure the oil trade for Philadelphia. Again, he met with a polite but unhelpful response. 189

¹⁸⁵ Her gravestone reads "Emily Duncan. Born at Carlisle February 26, 1793. Died in Irvine July 14, 1866."

¹⁸⁶ Stephen Duncan to Emily Duncan, New York, Dec. 24, 1864, Newbold-Irvine Papers. The New York Times, Jan. 30, 1867, notes his death: "Died on January 29, 1867, Dr. Stephen Duncan late of Natchez in his 80th year." Laurel Hill records give the date of his interment there as Feb. 1, 1867, and his name as Dr. Stephen A. Duncan.

¹⁸⁷ Articles of agreement with both Brighams dated Aug. 7, 1849, Newbold-Irvine Papers. 188 William G. Moorhead to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Apr. 21, 1861, *ibid*.

¹⁸⁹ Edward Miller to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Jan. 20, 1862, ibid.

LOCAL RATES

R TRANSPORTATION LINE

NORTHWARD.

From	Tc TIDIOUTE	To IRVINE.	
Oil City,	40c.	70c.	
Pit Hole,	40c.	60c.	

The rates to Irvine include free delivery on the Philadelphia and Erie Rail Road cars, free of all commissions except expenses prior to delivery in the boats of the line.

SOUTHWARD.

From	То	TIDIOUTE.		TIONESTA.		PIT HOLE.		OIL CITY.	
FIOM		Em. Boin.	PER 100 LBS.	Em. Bbis.	Midze.	Em. Bbis.	VIdze.	Em. Bbis.	Midze.
Irvine,		5c.	10c.		15c.	8c.	20c	8c.	20c.
Tidioute, -		-	ale an annual relevan		to be \$4000 of the Printing Securiors.	5c.		5c.	**************************************

The above rates include transfer of goods from the Philadelphia and Erie Rail Road cars, and are free of all commission up to point of delivery on the Landings at the points named, but do not include any charge for Wharfage, &c., that may be made after the goods leave the Company's Boats. These must be borne by consignee Bulky and unwieldy articles of merchandize will be charged 1½ times above Rates.

For Special Through Rates, (subject to no extra charge or commission,) between Oil City and Corry, Erie, New-York, Boston, Buffalo, Rochester, Cleveland and Chicago, on Oil, Empty Barrels and Merchandise,

Apply to

Agent at Oil City,

Or T. F. WRIGHT & CO.,

Prop's Allegheny River Transportation Company,

MARK SHIPMENTS, Via. Allegheny River Trans. Co. IRVINE, WARREN CO., PA.

Irvine, June 24, 1862.

ERIE DISPATCH.

Transportation Rates Between Irvine and the Oil Fields

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23

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127	125	94
185	144	95
115	123	96

Oak Street

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SURVEYOR.

180.fi Street Depot Street CHEEK Hater Street. NOWAN 146 147 62 X treet man O'Thin BROKENSTRAW 4 Thoman A STANCE OF THE 111 Thay 36 Geo Ferr 100.5%

Short of a railroad connection to Tidioute, the best way to bring its oil to the Philadelphia and Eric Railroad, which in its early days had a station just across the highway from the Cornplanter Hotel at Irvine, 190 was by boat. Dr. Irvine was evidently much interested, presumably a stockholder, in several river transportation ventures. The Allegheny River Transportation Line was in service by 1862, and was largely engaged in carrying oil in barrels. It ran from Oil City, with stops at Pit Hole and Tidioute, to its headquarters at Irvine. Its rates to Irvine included free delivery on the Philadelphia and Eric cars. Presumably, its boat entered Brokenstraw Creek and discharged its cargo at a landing below the dam. 191

From his house, the Doctor must often have watched the *Pioneer*, an eighty-foot-long flatboat with a square bow, ascend the river loaded with barrels of oil and towing seventy-five-foot-long flatboats carrying the same cargo. The *Pioneer* was equipped not only with a propeller and a small paddle wheel but also with an adjustable wheel which ran on the river bottom. It was owned by the Oil Creek and Warren Transportation Company and ran between Tidioute and Irvine, powering its way upstream at three miles an hour.¹⁹²

By 1866, however, the river trade in oil was over and Dr. Irvine had his dream come true—a railroad to the oil fields. In that year, the Warren and Franklin Railroad, a petroleum carrier, was completed from Irvine to Oil City, fifty-one miles away.¹⁹³ It ran from the village through Dr. Irvine's land, hugging the side of the high hills which rose above the flats and actually cutting two of his stone houses and their barns off from the farm. The inconvenience this caused was small, for the farmers had no difficulty in crossing the tracks on their way to the fields.

The village of Irvine's two railroads brought much bustle and activity to the place. Indeed, the settlement was built around the intersection of the Warren and Franklin and the Philadelphia and Erie, and quickly attained the reputation of being the liveliest rail-

¹⁹⁰ This station was named Irvineton. Warren County, Pennsylvania, Almanac 1941, 16.

¹⁹¹ Local Rates on the Allegheny River Transportation Line, broadside, dated Irvine, June 24, 1862, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

¹⁹² Newspaper elipping in Oil Papers, ibid.

¹⁹³ Schenck, 310. Annual Report of the Auditor General of the State of Pennsylvania and of the Tabulations and Deductions from the Reports of the Rail Road and Canal Companies for the Year 1867 (Harrisburg, 1868), 373-376.

road town in the county. The engine house and the Union Depot were its most conspicuous landmarks. Of the 189 lots into which Dr. Irvine had divided the village, 105 appear to have been sold by 1866, and on quite a number were houses he had built for his workmen. Indian memories were evoked by the street names he used—"Bucaloons" and "Senica."¹⁹⁴

With good transportation assured, Dr. Irvine started to develop his tract in Limestone Township. On March 19, 1867, he entered into an arrangement with P. S. Buck and F. C. Ford to survey and subdivide into one-acre lots a hundred acres of his Irvine Farm. Buck and Ford were to be his agents in selling rights to bore for petroleum on these lots, and were to have as commission two thirds of any sum received for a lot above the thousand dollar minimum price set by Dr. Irvine.

This price may have been too steep. At all events, not long after Buck and Ford completed their surveys, 195 they left the Doctor's service. Dr. Irvine then established an office in Tidioute for the "Irvine Oil Tract," hired Robert C. Beach, an attorney and cashier of the Peoples Saving Bank of Tidioute, as his agent, and started leasing lots on a royalty basis.

These activities were in their formative days when he found that Orange Noble, president of the Keystone National Bank at Erie, claimed his tract and had dug two producing wells on it. Noble was abetted by P. S. Buck and F. C. Ford, of all people. Dr. Irvine immediately brought a suit of ejectment against Noble. The resultant litigation, which dragged on for years, was expensive and the result uncertain. Naturally, this worried the Doctor's daughters. When an opportunity arose to sell the tract at more than ten times its pre-oil era value, they wanted very much to dispose of it.

Dr. Irvine, of course, had always had his own way, but the situation was delicate. On paper, his daughters' lands represented at least two thirds of their inheritance. Their husbands were much interested in this potential wealth, but it was firmly under the management of

¹⁹⁴ Map of Irvine, Pa. By P. Falconer, County Surveyor, 1866. Newbold-Irvine Papers. Howden & Odbert's Atlas of Warren County, Pennsylvania (Washington, Pa., 1878), 18.

¹⁹⁵ To advertise this venture, W. A. Irvine had the surveys lithographed in color by J. Haehnlen of Philadelphia, an expert on maps. Nearly a hundred of these maps were found at Irvine in 1963. They were titled *Map of Part of the Irvine Oil Territory near Tidioute*.

their father-in-law, and he would not make any sales of consequence. Thus, the inheritance was largely nonproductive.

Dr. Irvine would brook no interference. When he learned that one of his sons-in-law had investigated the desirability of selling the oil tract, he was put out. His daughter Margaret hastened to soothe him: "It is quite true that I wrote you at one time putting that property in your hands to manage." Taking into consideration the uncertainty of the law case and the probable depreciation of the oil land, she nevertheless observed: "I do not wish to do anything against your advice, and will leave it to you to decide about this sale. It would not be fair after all your work and trouble to do otherwise. So far as my own views are concerned, you know I have not much faith or hopefulness about the results, but will be only too glad if I am entirely



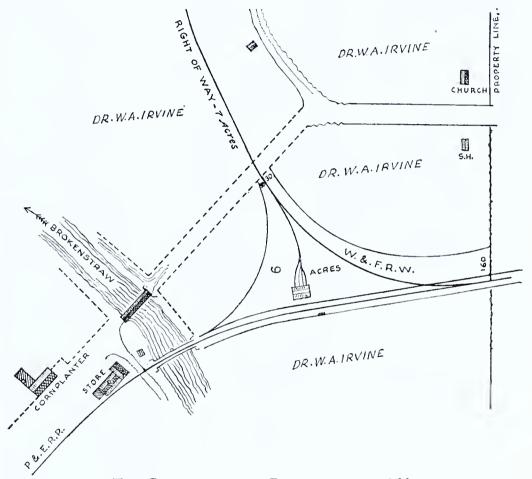
mistaken—however, if you get an offer of \$100,000 do think about taking it." And later she wrote him more reassurance: "I am sorry I did not express myself clearly and say that I have always refused to interfere in any way." Child of her grandfather that she was, she could not help observing that her father had never approved of any large sale of the Irvine property. 196

After seven years of battling, Dr. Irvine triumphed over Orange Noble in 1874, and from then on operated the Irvine Oil Tract in peace. He built the Irvine Pipe Line to connect with the pipe line that crossed the new bridge at Tidioute. In its prime, his tract had seventeen producing wells on it, but it was not bringing in much money. His agent Beach, who had lost his job with the bank because he had misappropriated money, began secretly selling oil for his own benefit in 1875. Ultimately, he went bankrupt and was found out.¹⁹⁷

196 Mrs. M. E. I. Biddle to W. A. Irvine, Philadelphia, Jan. 14, 1869, and Jan. 19, 1869, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

197 J. S. Breitenstein to W. A. Irvine, Tidioute, Oct. 24 and 29, 1878, ibid.

The new agent, J. S. Breitenstein, who took over in November, 1878, wrote Dr. Irvine about Beach: "If he had any friends, they ought to have put him in the Inebriate Asylum at Binghampton for six months." Breitenstein appears to have been an efficient man. He was a member of an operators' group that sought to stabilize and raise the price of oil so that competition would not be ruinous. Over



THE CROSSING OF THE BROKENSTRAW, 1866

the scene loomed the huge shadow of the Standard Oil Company, and small operators had much to fear. In 1879, Breitenstein informed Dr. Irvine: "We have letters from Rockafellar and various directors of the Standard Oil Co. which are all that we could ask. If we can not unite the producers, we mean to take care of ourselves." 199

¹⁹⁸ J. S. Breitenstein to W. A. Irvine, Tidioute, Dec. 12, 1878, ibid.

¹⁹⁹ J. S. Breitenstein to W. A. Irvine, Tidioute, Jan. 17, 1879, ibid.

Under Dr. Irvine's orders, Breitenstein continued to sink new wells. On April 2, 1880, he reported: "Well completed on March 31st and will not pay for pumping. It has produced about a gallon of oil and several barrels of salt water. . . . Shall we venture again on the south end of lot 66 or not?" Actually, the oil on the tract was about gone. In 1882, it produced only fifty dollars in royalties a month. By the time of Dr. Irvine's death, the oil field was no longer of value and the chance to have capitalized on it had long since passed away.

During these oil years, Dr. Irvine enjoyed an increased income which he supplemented by unceasing activity in the lumber business. In this latter endeavor, he had the assistance of his daughter Margaret. Sarah's interest seems to have been in keeping up the farm. The big house on the Allegheny took on renewed charm for the Doctor with the arrival of Sarah's children.

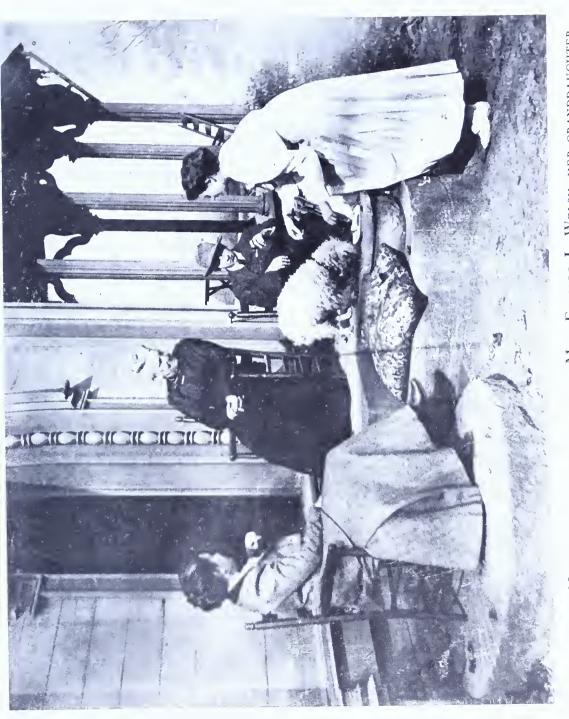
In his latter years, he was prone to spend much time in Philadelphia. During the 1850's, he preferred the Washington House at 709 Chestnut Street as a place to stop. The 1860's found him using the St. Lawrence Hotel, and the 1870's the stylish La Pierre House.²⁰⁰ Visits to Philadelphia helped break the long rugged winters at Irvine, enabled him to move in literary circles, and to see old friends.

But he was never long away from Irvine. Back he would go on the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad to the station the railroad men, much to his indignation, called Irvineton. Later, the postal authorities wanted to change the name of the post office to correspond with the station; the Irvine family protested that.²⁰¹

Met at Irvineton's Union Depot by his smart little carriage, Dr. Irvine drove eagerly homeward on roads he himself had named—Erie Avenue to the grandly designated Broadway, which cut the village off from the northern reaches of his farm. Up Broadway he went and then left on Tidioute Street, off which he soon plunged on a narrow lane down the steep wooded hillside, across the tracks of the Warren and Franklin and through an entrance to his farm. Passing by his fish pond with its ornamental island, the carriage emerged from under the trees, swept past a broad wheat field with views of pastures and orchards beyond, and approached a gate which opened automatically to admit the vehicle. And so home, up the

²⁰⁰ Bills in ibid.

²⁰¹ Mrs. Newbold and Mrs. Biddle to the Postmaster General, June 2, 1892, ibid.



Mrs. Thomas Newbold with her daughter Mrs. Edward L. Welsh, her granddaughter SARAH WELSH (MRS. CARYL ROBERTS) AND JOHN W. CAPPEAU OF PITTSBURGH, 1908



WINTERTIME, 1920



At GUST GROSS AT THE BARNS, 1920

little rise into the mansion compound, past the flower garden laid out long ago by John Rose and now tended by a Scotch gardener, and around the house to its Gothic doorway with its high stone step for carriage arrivals. While his Swedish coachman took the carriage back to the barn, Dr. Irvine sought the sanctity of his library.

There, ranged shelf on shelf around the room, were the books that represented his interests—agriculture, animal husbandry, literature, history. Some had belonged to his father, and some to his grandfather, but most had been collected by the Doctor. Periodicals, neatly bound up year after year, took up much space. The best and most thoughtful authors of the day were well represented. It was a restful room and thoroughly masculine, furnished with substantial leather-upholstered chairs, not at all like the adjoining parlor which, with its vases and decorations, its piano and gewgaws, was a lady's room. Yet it was in the parlor that General William Irvine's portrait hung. His spurs and silver pistols were in the library.

General Irvine's papers also belonged to Dr. Irvine and were the source of a large correspondence with many noted historians, including Neville B. Craig, Lyman Draper, and Benson J. Lossing. Some of the papers the Doctor contributed to publications, like John Gilmary Shea's The Historical Magazine and Notes and Queries Concerning the Antiquities, History and Biography of America, or Colonel John W. Forney's Progress, a Mirror for All Men and Women, published in Philadelphia every Saturday. But the major printing of the documents took place in 1882 when Consul W. Butterfield brought out the Washington-Irvine Correspondence. Dr. Irvine was always responsive when approached by historians, always willing to lend them large packages of the General's valuable Revolutionary manuscripts.

He became a benefactor of historical societies and in 1859 a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In 1864, he retained the respected Philadelphia artist J. R. Lambdin to paint a copy of the General's portrait. So pleased was he with Lambdin's skill that the next year he ordered three more copies at seventy-five dollars each, together with suitable gilt frames from E. Newland & Company, carvers and gilders of Arch Street.²⁰² One of these pictures he presented to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,²⁰³ another to the New-York Historical Society.

²⁰² Bills in ibid.

²⁰³ It is now on loan to Dickinson College.

Allied to his interest in history was his activity in the Society of the Cincinnati. He became president of the Pennsylvania branch and vice-president of the national organization, and traveled far and wide to attend their meetings. The Doctor was closely concerned with the creation of a notable monument to Washington. This project had been started by the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati in 1810. Seventy years later, the Society had \$187,000 in hand²⁰⁴ and under Dr. Irvine's presidency commissioned a German artist to do the work. Not until 1897, however, was the statue unveiled. A famous Philadelphia landmark, it stands on the Parkway below the Art Museum.

And so the years sped by until even Dr. Irvine had to admit that he had become a very old man. Clean-shaven in a hairy age, his bald head fringed with close-cut white hair, his eyes strengthened by small old-fashioned steel-rimmed spectacles, he made an impressive appearance, and at times a formidable one. The square thrust of his jaw clearly indicated his stubbornness, but his eyes suggested a benign quality that found its outlet in his love for his children and grandchildren. "His person was imposing," wrote an editor, "and his manner refined."²⁰⁵

Until worn down by gout in his last years, his vigorous constitution served him well. In his middle 70's, he thought nothing of the thirty-mile round trip to the Tidioute oil field. On one of these occasions he was thrown from his horse, but remounted unhurt.

The evening of his life found Dr. Irvine at his house, perhaps still occupying the front bedroom that he had so long ago shared with Sarah. Not many rafts went down the Allegheny past his windows any more, but the property seemed unchanged. He had held it together, shielded and protected it, overruled all efforts to sell it, and, if he did not die possessed of it, he died in it. By the time of Doctor Irvine's death, which occurred on September 7, 1886, three weeks before his eighty-third birthday, his daughters had lost their former desire to make large sales of the Irvine property, and had succumbed to his dominant will. Next to his wife they buried him, and over his grave they placed a tall monument in memory of the man who had brought Irvine to the peak of its glory.

²⁰⁴ *PMHB*, XLVI (1922), 76–77.

²⁰⁵ Warren Ledger, Sept. 10, 1886.

Biddles and Newbolds

The lives of Dr. Irvine's two daughters were similar in that they both married, produced daughters, and lost their husbands early. Margaret, or Minnie, the elder daughter, became the wife of Thomas Montgomery Biddle of Carlisle on December 10, 1857. Dr. Boardman of Philadelphia performed the service, which was held at Avendale, home of the Irvines' cousins, the Leipers of Swarthmore.²⁰⁶

For the next two years, the Biddles lived at Carlisle, and then, in October, 1859, they moved to 273 South Fourth Street, Philadelphia, where Thomas conducted his law practice. In May, 1861, they went to Irvine and made that their home for a year and a half before moving on to Erie, a better place for Thomas' legal career and for Mrs. Biddle to raise her daughters.

Her first child had been born in Carlisle on April 13, 1859, and had been named Emily Duncan after Minnie's foster mother. Next came Lydia Spencer, born in Philadelphia on November 3, 1860, and named after Thomas Biddle's oldest sister. Finally, there was Sarah Duncan Irvine, born at Irvine on May 17, 1862. Less than two years later, the young father of this little tribe died at Erie and was buried at Irvine.

The widowed Minnie and her daughters continued to summer at the new house the Biddles had built about two miles from the Irvine homestead, on the far side of the Brokenstraw Creek.²⁰⁷ However, winters at Irvine were to be avoided, and it is probable that after Thomas' death the Biddles returned to Philadelphia for the cold season. It was there that fifteen-year-old Sarah Duncan Irvine Biddle died on June 7, 1877. Her remains were sent to Irvine to be interred beside her father.

206 Thomas Montgomery Biddle (July 9, 1829–Jan. 28, 1864) was the son of William Macfunn Biddle and Julia Montgomery. Data on the Biddles is based largely on entries made in the Biddle family Bible in the possession of Mrs. Caryl Roberts, and on the gravestones in the Irvine family plot.

207 This house may have been an enlargement of an older house. At least it is said to have stood on the site of the house erected by Callender Irvine after his first cabin was washed away by a flood in 1805.

Minnie Biddle farmed her property near Irvine and kept it up in fine order. For her winter home, she ultimately selected Washington, where she bought a house. No doubt, it was in Washington that her daughter Emily met Sidney Augustus Staunton, a naval officer. The two were married on September 23, 1886, and six years later Emily died without leaving any children. Staunton carried on, achieving the rank of rear admiral in 1910, and in 1912 retired at the age of sixty-two. Washington and the Biddle house at Irvine were his homes until his death on January 11, 1939, when he was buried next to his wife in Washington's Rock Creek Cemetery.²⁰⁸

Mrs. Biddle lived to the ripe old age of ninety, dying on June 29, 1925, and being laid to rest in the family graveyard at Irvine. There she was joined seven years later by her daughter Lydia, who died on March 22, 1932. Lydia left her personal estate to her cousin Daisy Newbold, with a life interest in the Biddle part of the Irvine family land, which was ultimately to pass to the United States Department of Agriculture.²⁰⁹

Thus, no Irvine descendants through Minnie Biddle survive. The continuity of the settlement which Callender Irvine had pioneered was to depend on Minnie's sister Sarah. On October 15, 1863, Sarah married Dr. Thomas Newbold at Erie. A Philadelphian, Dr. Newbold had received both his bachelor's degree in 1849 and his medical degree in 1852 from the University of Pennsylvania, and had then traveled in England and France.²¹⁰

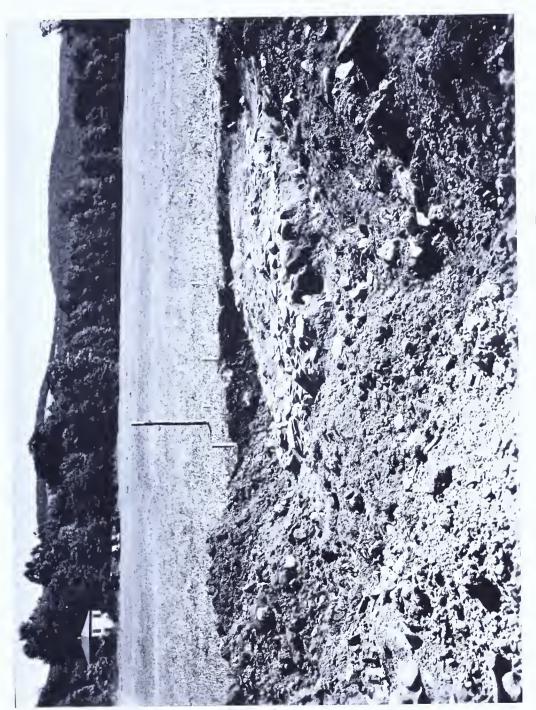
Between 1865 and 1872, the Newbolds had a succession of daughters, five in all—Elizabeth, Mary, Margaret called Daisy, Emily called Bonnie, and Esther.²¹¹ Less than two years after Esther's

208 Records of Rock Creek Cemetery. For Admiral Staunton's career, see Army and Navy Register, Jan. 14, 1939; Who Was Who in America, 1899–1942 (Chicago, 1942), 1173.

200 As a part of the program of the United States Forest Service, the Forest Recreation and Wildlife Laboratory at the former Biddle property has three projects: Forest Recreation Research for the twelve northeastern states, Wildlife Habitat Research for the same area, and Timber Management Research for Northern Pennsylvania and Western New York.

²¹⁰ His diplomas and passport are in the Newbold-Irvine Papers. His parents were Michael Newbold and Esther Lowndes. Miss M. E. I. Newbold to Mrs. Caryl Roberts, July 8, 1936. Letter owned by Mrs. Roberts.

211 Their full names and dates are as follows: Elizabeth Irvine Newbold, Sept. 5, 1865–June 21, 1929; Mary Middleton Newbold, Dec. 10, 1866–Dec. 27, 1933; Margaret Ellis Irvine Newbold, July 25, 1868–May 30, 1955; Emily Duncan Newbold, Oct. 2, 1869–Dec. 15, 1931; Esther Lowndes Newbold, May 22, 1872–Apr. 24, 1963. The four younger daughters were all born at Irvine. Newbold family Bible in possession of Mrs. Caryl Roberts; gravestones at Irvine and at St. Thomas' Churchyard, Whitemarsh, Pa.



Uncovering an Indian Burial Mound on the Flats, 1937 Note the stone house built by Dr. Irvine in 1841 for the miller.



The Stone House "in the Hollow," 1937 Built by Dr. Irvine in 1841 for one of his farmers.

birth, her father died in Erie.²¹² Although his death was sudden, it could not have been unexpected because he had been an invalid for years. A cousin of the family writing about the event observed: "He was sick barely four hours. Dear Sarah is in great grief. I never saw a set of prettier little girls—bright and pretty and she dresses them most beautifully."²¹³

Mrs. Newbold raised her children in Philadelphia, where she kept house and sent the girls to Miss Agnes Irwin's School. Summertime found the family at Irvine, riding, canoeing, and playing tennis. They took an interest in the farm, which was run in an extensive way, and were saddened when the "home" sawmill and the gristmill were shut down a few years after Dr. Irvine's death.²¹⁴ The millstones were brought to the main house and placed decoratively on either side of the front steps. The scale of living at Irvine was far from grand, although when the children were young Mrs. Newbold and her father employed a nurse, waitress, cook, chamber maid, and a dairy maid. In addition to these servants, the coachman and the gardener also slept in the house, according to the 1870 census. The farmers had their own quarters. Irvine meant a great deal to all the Newbolds. They delighted to return to it after winters in Philadelphia or vacations in Bermuda and Europe. Many of their friends from Philadelphia and Bermuda were entertained there, as the guest book shows.

Only Elizabeth, the oldest of the five Newbold girls ever married. Attended at the Irvine church by her sisters as bridesmaids, she became Mrs. Edward Lowber Welsh on September 14, 1889.²¹⁵ Mr. Welsh was the son of John Lowber Welsh, a leader in Philadelphia traction and public utility interests, and the grandson of John Welsh, United States minister to England.

The Welshes lived part of the year at their Philadelphia house, 1422 Spruce Street. In summer, they resided at Shadow Farm, a beautiful property at Wakefield, Rhode Island, and in winter they went to their place at Palm Beach. After Mrs. Newbold gave up her

²¹² According to his 1852 passport, Dr. Newbold was evidently born in 1829. He died either in December, 1873 or January, 1874.

²¹³ Mary Fayssoux Leiper to her daughter Rebecca Fayssoux Leiper, Jan. 15, 1874. Typescript courtesy of Mrs. A. Waldo Jones of Vinings, Georgia.

²¹⁴ The gristmill was converted by Mrs. Newbold into a hay barn in 1908 at a cost of one hundred dollars. Newbold-Irvine Papers.

²¹⁵ Newspaper clipping owned by Mrs. Caryl Roberts.

Philadelphia house, she and her unmarried daughters spent the winters at the Welsh residence, and also visited the Welshes from time to time in Florida and Rhode Island. In turn, the two Welsh children, Sarah Irvine Welsh and John Lowber Welsh, came to Irvine every fall for several weeks of fishing and driving.²¹⁶

Although not wealthy, the Biddles and Newbolds were generous with their land. Perhaps Minnie and Sarah took their example from their father, because in 1873 Dr. Irvine had offered to give a public park to the town of Warren. For some reason, the gift was not accepted. In 1899, however, the two sisters gave land for part of the location of the projected Warren Hospital in Richland. Three years later, they gave Warren the park their father had previously offered, a strip of land one hundred to one hundred and eighty feet wide extending along the south side of the Allegheny River for nearly a mile. It was there, at Crescent Park, that Lydia Biddle unveiled a monument to General William Irvine in October, 1913, when Pioneer Circle was dedicated. When the Biddle Park is and Proposed Park in Crescent Park, that Lydia Biddle unveiled a monument to General William Irvine in October, 1913, when Pioneer Circle was dedicated.

The death on September 23, 1916, of Mrs. Newbold at Irvine came as a terrible blow to her unmarried daughters. So strong were their feelings that, although it had not been Mrs. Newbold's wish, they had her buried at the end of the garden to the north of the house, instead of at the Irvine church. They could not bear to have her taken that scant mile away.

As soon as it could be arranged, the Newbold sisters were sent off to recover from the shock of their mother's death. Left in charge at the farm was August Gross, who had come to work at the age of nineteen in 1904 at a monthly salary of twenty-eight dollars. August was farmer, dairyman, and general factotum, and was to serve for fifty-five years as the family's most devoted servant and friend. On this occasion, Miss Daisy left him special instructions. August reported to her regularly by letter: "I have not missed a night since you went away in going out to Mrs. Newbold's & saying those two

²¹⁶ This and other information was given the author by Mrs. Caryl Roberts.

²¹⁷ John Sill, Burgess of Warren, to Dr. Thomas Newbold, July 2, 1873, Newbold-Irvine Papers.

²¹⁸ L. D. Wetmore, president of the Hospital, to Mrs. Biddle and Mrs. Newbold, Warren, Oct. 20, 1899, ibid.

²¹⁰ Warren Evening Mirror, Aug. 30, 1902, ibid.

²²⁰ Warren Evening Times, Oct. 4, 1913, ibid.



The Church at Irvine, 1937 Built for Dr. Irvine by Robert Shortt in 1838.



THE HOMESTEAD FROM THE ALLEGHENY RIVER, 1958

prayers," he wrote.²²¹ At Christmastime for years afterward, when August was alone at Irvine, he decorated the grave, using all the flowers from the greenhouse. Just after Christmas, 1924, he wrote Miss Daisy: "I made a very nice cross for Mrs. Newbold as I had more flowers this year than any other year before & they were so nice. I had three roses to put in. I had the whole stone covered with flowers & green things."²²² Miss Daisy and her sisters Mary and Esther wore mourning for the rest of their lives.

Winter after winter, while they were all away, August Gross stood guard at Irvine. He tended the greenhouse, cared for the cows, gathered the eggs, and managed everything. It was lonely work and he longed for his employers' return. With the temperature dropping twenty degrees below zero, he was isolated from the world, except for the erratic performance of his crystal set and the company of his animal friends. Some flavor of the man comes through in a letter he wrote to Miss Daisy on February 24, 1924. "I am afraid my old black cat isent going to live very much longer as he is getting very feeble & the more I think of it the worse he looks to me. I never will get another cat that will set by me when I am milking like he has for all these years. If I would have had time, I might of tried to train Buster, but it takes a long time to get all the cows to know the cat as they wont let a strange cat sit in the stall." 223

While in residence at Irvine, the Newbold sisters saw comparatively little of the people who lived nearby. Miss Esther, the youngest, had studied law at the University of Pennsylvania, but never practiced. Her legal training stimulated her interest in legislation at Harrisburg. She carefully studied all the bills under consideration and conducted a large correspondence with politicians, frequently directing her letters to her cousin the political boss of Pennsylvania, Boies Penrose. Herbert Hoover was another recipient of her political views. Aside from politics, she supervised the farm and the marketing of its eggs, milk, butter, and hay.

Miss Bonnie ran the house and saw that the food was excellent. Plump and good-natured, she achieved economic security through fortunate investments and bought a house at Wakefield near the

223 Ibid.

²²¹ August Gross to Miss M. E. I. Newbold, Irvine, Oct. 5, 1916, *ibid*. ²²² August Gross to Miss M. E. I. Newbold, Irvine, Dec. 28, 1924, *ibid*.

Welshes. Miss Mary, a woman of rather uncompromising fiber like Miss Esther, sat around the house sewing. Of all the unmarried Newbolds, Miss Daisy was the most appealing. Her chief interest at Irvine was the greenhouse in which flourished many exotic plants from Florida.

The Newbold ladies had a violent distaste for trespassers and instantly turned the law on anyone detected on the farm. It is said that they forbade their farm hands from smoking or spitting on the ground. Returning from their travels, they always disinfected their luggage before permitting it to be carried into the house. Although they did not make things easy for utility companies, modern conveniences finally came to the homestead. In the 1920's, plumbing, the telephone, and electricity, after a meager fashion, were installed. Chamber pots remained, even so, kerosene lamps still abounded, and with good reason—the main hall, the two parlors, and the two main bedrooms above were never wired. Nor was the house ever furnished with central heating.

Another family crisis was brought on by the death of Mrs. Welsh in Philadelphia on June 21, 1929. In life, Mrs. Welsh had largely escaped the influence of Irvine and death brought no reunion, for she was buried at St. Thomas' Churchyard at Whitemarsh, near Philadelphia. Two years later, Miss Bonnie died at Wakefield and was brought back to Irvine for interment next to her mother in the garden. These sad events together with hard times did much to shut in the lives of the three remaining sisters. Their travels became less frequent, their visits to the Acorn Club in Philadelphia began to fall off. In the end, old age was to bind them to the family house.

For want of maintenance, the mansion started to deteriorate. The curious wooden decoration over the north porch yielded to the elements. The cupola on top of the house became dangerous and was removed. The fancy railings along the rooftops disappeared. All over the property change and decay were to be seen. The stone houses were derelict, the cattle barn collapsed, little was kept up. Long gone were the woolen mill, the foundry, blacksmith shop, the store, and many other buildings, with scarce a sign to mark their sites. A

²²⁴ Mrs. Welsh's husband, Edward Lowber Welsh (Dec. 28, 1866-Jan. 3, 1935), and her son, John Lowber Welsh (June 6, 1891-Mar. 6, 1955), are buried with her at St. Thomas'.

ghostly atmosphere crept over house and grounds, a sense of generations gone and of vanished niceties.

August Gross kept the place running as best he could, usually with the help of at least one assistant. One day in 1933, while working at the barn, a voice seemed to say to him, "August, there is trouble at the house." He ran there as fast as he could, to find that Mary Newbold had just died.²²⁵ Believing that cold baths were good for her, she had taken an icy plunge and had suffered a heart attack. She, too, was buried in the garden. Miss Daisy and Miss Esther both lived on for many years, becoming at last helpless invalids. In 1955, Miss Daisy died in the Warren Hospital and was buried with her mother and sisters. Four years later, August Gross, for so long the pillar of the house, went to his reward. Miss Esther remained at the homestead, tended by nurses. Like her mother before her, she had been born in that house, and like her mother she intended to die there. In April, 1963, death came to her in the bedroom which had been her mother's. In less than one month, she would have been ninety-one years old.

At her death, the Newbold property passed to her oldest sister's heirs, Sarah Welsh, who had married Caryl Roberts of Philadelphia in 1913, and John L. Welsh, Jr., whose father had married Charlotte Le Moine Dunlop of Virginia in 1921 and who had died in 1955. The heirs returned to Irvine to find the house little changed since the death of Dr. William A. Irvine in 1886. Except for decay, the place was much the same. The library shelves were still lined with his books and those of his father and grandfather, some of them having been in the possession of the family for more than two hundred years. Papers of five generations of the family crammed trunks, desks, and bureaus. Still ready for use in the carriage house, where they had been placed so long ago, were several of Dr. Irvine's carriages and sleighs. Hanging nearby were half a dozen side saddles, reminders of the days when the pretty Newbold girls rode out in force. Even Miss Bonnie's 1928 Ford stood patiently by. Stored here and there were the little stoves which used to stand in every room, and the quaint circular tin bathtubs that had been replaced by plumbing fixtures. Evidently, not much had ever been thrown out.

²²⁵ This episode was narrated by August Gross to the writer in 1958.

The heirs took away some furniture, silver, china, and glass, and all the family portraits, of which there were thirteen. The family papers and many books were sent to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Everything else was sold. Steps were initiated toward removing the bodies of Mrs. Newbold and her three daughters from the garden to the Irvine church, where Miss Esther had been buried. Lastly, the heirs disposed of the property itself, which still consisted of more than a thousand acres. Thus, for the descendants of General William Irvine, the road to Irvine had come to an end.



The Irvine Papers at

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

At the time of his death in 1886, Dr. Irvine evidently had at Irvine the complete correspondence of General William Irvine, General Callender Irvine, and his own voluminous papers. No scrap or bill was too unimportant to be preserved and all was kept in order. Dr. Irvine left no will, but his daughters knew that he wanted General William Irvine's manuscripts to go to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In 1887, they honored this intention and the papers accessioned in that year as the gift of Dr. Irvine were mounted in sixteen volumes, here referred to as the "Gen. Irvine Papers." Although this group numbered about two thousand documents, it is clear that the daughters retained a large fraction of the General's papers and kept them at their houses in Irvine.

In 1956, the Historical Society purchased from a source in Florida about five hundred Irvine manuscripts. These were chiefly War of 1812 papers of General Irvine's son, Colonel William N. Irvine, but they also included papers of the Colonel's son Dr. Galbraith A. Irvine of Warren. This collection is cited in the footnotes as "G. A. Irvine Papers."

On the death of Miss Esther L. Newbold in 1963, her heirs, Mrs. Caryl Roberts and John L. Welsh, Jr., presented to the Historical Society all the papers in the house at Irvine. These were found to be in wild confusion, stuffed in drawers and trunks all over the house. They had been grievously ransacked, nevertheless many thousands of them had escaped destruction. They are here cited as the "Newbold-Irvine Papers."

Just as this collection was being received at the Society, a New York dealer offered a lot of two hundred and twenty-five Irvine papers, being mostly letters of General Irvine, some of Callender Irvine's correspondence, and several William A. Irvine items. This group had come to the dealer from a man who said he had found them

on a trash heap. Through the kindness of Mrs. Caryl Roberts, the Historical Society was able to purchase these papers and they are here referred to as the "Mrs. Caryl Roberts-Irvine Papers."

Although the Historical Society's four Irvine collections constitute a vast quantity of material, it probably represents less than fifty per cent of the manuscripts in Dr. Irvine's possession at the time of his death. What became of the rest? The answer perhaps lies in the fact that Dr. Irvine's daughter Margaret built her own house after her marriage. This house was about two miles from the Irvine homestead, and to it many of the family papers may have been moved. From 1932 until the house was torn down about 1960, it was little used. Its contents may well have been pillaged. It is also more than probable that manuscripts were stolen from the Irvine homestead as well. At any rate, papers which were most certainly in one house or the other continue to come on the market and are offered to collectors by dealers in manuscripts.

